



Library of the Theological Seminary,
PRINCETON, N. J.

Presented by Mr. Samuel Agnew of Philadelphia, Pa.

Division.....

Section.....

Number.....

BV 630 .B878 C3 1838 c.1
Carson, Alexander, 1776-
1844.

Review of Dr. Brown on the
law of Christ respecting

REVIEW

OF

DR. BROWN ON THE LAW OF CHRIST
RESPECTING CIVIL OBEDIENCE,

ESPECIALLY IN THE

PAYMENT OF TRIBUTE.

WITH AN

APPENDIX,

RELATIVE TO GRAMMATICAL ACCURACY, AS IT BEARS ON
THE QUESTION OF THE INSPIRATION OF THE
SCRIPTURES, IN REPLY TO THE REV.
MR. MENZIES, THE TRANSLATOR OF
THOLUCK ON THE EPISTLE
TO THE ROMANS.

BY ALEXANDER CARSON, A.M.

LONDON:

HAMILTON, ADAMS, & CO.

EDINBURGH: WILLIAM WHYTE AND CO.

DUBLIN: WILLIAM CARSON, AND

WILLIAM M'COMBE, BELFAST.

M.DCCC.XXXVIII.

EDINBURGH:
PRINTED BY T. CONSTABLE, THISTLE STREET.



PREFACE.

THE grounds and extent of the doctrine of obedience to Civil Government are questions of the greatest practical importance to Christians in every country and in every age. Civil rulers demand obedience, and if the Law of Christ suspends the submission of his people on their conviction with respect to the quality of the government, or the purposes of taxation, Christians must, in every country, be often at war with the existing powers. What, then, is the will of God on this subject? On this subject he has revealed his will in Rom. xiii. 1—7, in a strong, clear, full, and precise manner. Yet strong, clear, full, and precise as is the Apostle's language on this duty, his meaning is variously expounded. To ascertain, then, the meaning of this part of the word of God, according to the laws of language, must be of the utmost importance to every

Christian. Dr. Brown, in his late elaborate exposition of this passage, finds that, in certain circumstances, it is right to rebel; and that certain taxes, instead of being conscientiously paid, ought to be refused at the hazard of life and property. In reviewing his Lectures, I have pointed out no fewer than thirty false principles and assumptions, and the work could have afforded me many others. I have examined his criticism and his reasoning, and have found them equally false as his principles.

REVIEW, &c.

SECTION I.

A MULTITUDE OF FALSE PRINCIPLES AND ASSUMPTIONS DETECTED IN DR. BROWN'S WORK.

It has long been my opinion, that the boasted acquisitions of modern Biblical criticism are utterly delusive; and instead of leading with certainty to truth, are only a cover for evasion. Its canons, instead of being self-evident principles, which only could entitle its deductions to be called the Science of Interpretation, are generally nothing but arbitrary rules, many of which have been invented for the very purpose of eluding the meaning of the author, or of bringing out a meaning agreeable to the sentiments of the interpreter. I was never more struck with this fact, than on reading Dr. Brown's Exposition of the first seven verses of the Thirteenth Chapter of the Epistle to the Romans. I have not observed in any work a greater number of false principles in the same compass. The passage itself is so free from difficulty, and its meaning so clearly stated, that its exposition may safely be trusted to a child. Had not the doctrine of the

passage been opposed to the wisdom of this world, there never could have been a question about it. But by the help of the rules of his art, this learned interpreter brings out a meaning the very reverse of that of the Holy Spirit ; and instead of obedience, he inculcates, in certain circumstances, the right and duty of rebellion,—instead of urging the duty of paying taxes without exception, he teaches us to withstand the payment of some taxes even at the hazard of life. As the Pharisees made void the word of God by their traditions, so he makes it void by his canons of interpretations. In reviewing this work, then, I shall first attend to his assumptions and principles of exposition. I shall afterwards make some remarks on his criticism and reasoning.

I. His very title, as applied to his work, contains a false assumption. His work is entitled, “ On the Law of Christ respecting Civil Obedience, especially in the Payment of Tribute.” Now, where has he found the right to resist civil authority ? Where has he found his limitation of the duty of paying tribute ? Where has he found the distinction between general and specific taxes ? Is it in the passage expounded ? Is it any where in the Scriptures ? No such thing. These are the doctrines of erring mortals, founded not even on the pretence of an exposition of Scripture words, but on maxims of their own wisdom. They arrogantly assume to limit what the word of God teaches without limitation. Is it the Thirteenth Chapter of the Epistle to the Romans that teaches us, that in certain circumstances we ought to rebel against the government of our country ? Is it the precept enjoining to pay tri-

bute, that forbids us to pay certain taxes? No. It is Milton and Locke, and Hoadly and Paley, who have taught the *law of resistance*. It is not the *law of God*. Were these men inspired with the Spirit of Christ, that their limitation of the law of Christ should be called the law of Christ? Dr. Brown should have entitled his work, not an 'exposition of the law of Christ, contained in Rom. xiii. 1—7, but the law of Christ, Rom. xiii. 1—7, limited by Locke and Milton, and Hoadly and Paley. Can that be a law of Christ, which is not contained in his word? It may be alleged that the exceptions are consistent with Rom. xiii. 1—7; but that they are any part of that law, it is absurd to assert. Whatever authority Dr. Brown may choose to give to his exceptions, they cannot be the law of Christ, Rom. xiii. 1—7, because they are not to be found in that passage. The law of Christ they cannot be, because they are not taught in any part of the Scriptures. If Christians have a right to rebel, if it is a sin to pay certain taxes, certainly they do not find these things in Rom. xiii. 1—7. For the knowledge of this right and of this sin, they must go to the political philosophers, and to the casuistry of Dr. Brown, with respect to the distinction between general and specific taxes.

II. The writer states, as an important principle of interpretation, a rule which indeed has received the approbation of Biblical critics, but which is both false and mischievous. "To understand any book," says he, "not strictly of a scientific kind, thoroughly, it is necessary to be intimately acquainted with the

events of the age and country in which it was written, and with the customs and habits of thought of the people to whom it was originally addressed." I utterly deny the authority of this canon. On what does it rest? It is a mere assumption. It is not self-evident, and therefore cannot challenge assent. On the contrary, I maintain that it is quite possible to write a book, not on science, which will be intelligible to all who thoroughly understand the language, while the reader has no other acquaintance with the events of the age and country in which it was written, nor of the customs and habits of the people to whom it was originally addressed, than that which the work itself affords him; far from such prerequisites being necessary, if a book is not intelligible to those properly acquainted with the language, there must be a fault in the composition. It is a foul calumny on the Scriptures, to represent that the laws of Christ, which are intended to direct his people in every age and in every country, are not intelligible without the knowledge of other things not contained in the Scriptures. If any law of Christ cannot be understood by his people, without knowledge which the Scriptures do not afford, the Scriptures are a deficient guide. If they are such a book, they are not a revelation. It is as absurd as it is wicked, to suppose that the Holy Spirit modified his language in recording the laws of Christ, by the customs and habits of those to whom they were originally addressed. Obedience to civil rulers is perfectly the same thing to Christians in all ages and countries. The Scriptures are to be interpreted, not from such previous knowledge, nor from "the modes

of thought and feeling" prevalent in the times of the interpreter, but from their own language. The interpretation of Rom. xiii. 1—7 is perfectly the same thing, whether the interpreter lives in an age and country of the purest barbarism and of the most tyrannical despotism, or in an age and country of the highest civilization and liberty. Such differences have not the smallest effect on the language of the law of Christ, and should not have any on the interpretation of it.

To the want of the above prerequisites, or inattention to them, Dr. Brown ascribes the opposite expositions of this chapter in former times in this country. But the fact alluded to had no such origin. The opposite expositions of this part of the word of God were not owing to ignorance of the times in which the epistle was written, but to the different inclinations and prepossessions of the interpreters. Each party found their own doctrine on Rom. xiii. 1—7, because they wished it to be there. The Apostle taught either the divine right of kings, or the duty of rebellion, according to the system of his interpreter.

III. He assumes, p. 5, that what is "present to the mind" of the writer, and "the direct and primary object" of the writing, must be known, not from what is written, but from other sources of information. This is divination, not interpretation. The interpreter can lawfully know what was before the mind of the writer, or what was his direct and primary object in writing, only from the writing itself.

IV. That Christian subjects have a right, in certain circumstances, to rebel, he founds on a principle not contained in Scripture. "On the one hand," says he,

p. 5, "it was maintained by Milton and Vane, and Locke and Hoadly, with invincible argument and overwhelming eloquence, that civil government, being an institution intended entirely for promoting the security and welfare of the community at large, whenever that end was obviously not obtained,—when the power which was created for the purpose of protecting life and property was habitually and notoriously exercised in endangering or destroying both,—that it was the right and the duty of every man, by all lawful and constitutional means, to have the government so altered as to gain its end; and if all other methods were found ineffectual to secure the necessary alteration, that the people had the right as well as the power to put down such an intolerable tyranny by force." Here the right of rebellion is founded on reason, without alleging even the colour of Scripture. Can that be a Christian duty which is not taught in Scripture? If this is a right and duty, it cannot be called a Scripture right and duty; for it pretends no origin in Scripture. If this is a right and duty, the Scriptures are defective; for they do not teach it. Are Milton and Vane, and Locke and Hoadly, the depositaries of the Spirit of God on the subject? If Christians have such a right and duty, the Scripture must teach it, and what the circumstances are in which it exists. But as the Scriptures teach no such thing, no such right and duty can exist.

V. The principle on which Milton and Vane, and Locke and Hoadly, build their doctrine, is not only not Scriptural, but is in itself false. That civil government, as an institution of man, ought to be en-

tirely for the promoting of the security and welfare of the community at large, may be true ; but the Apostle in this chapter, treats of civil government as the ordinance of God. It is not self-evident, then, that the promoting of the security and welfare of the community is *entirely* the object of God in the institution of civil government. It is possible that God may have other objects also in view, such as the punishing of wicked nations through tyrannical rulers, and the affording of an opportunity for the manifestation of the cruelty of man in tyranny and oppression. Rulers may serve the great purpose of preserving society, while they are enormously profligate. We know that tyrannical rulers were given to Israel to punish them for their idolatry. The only person in the house of Jeroboam in whom there was any good, was taken away in youth. Righteous rulers sometimes do not answer God's purposes. He can do his work by his enemies as well as by his friends. The great monarchies to which God gave the world were all savage "beasts ;" and the fiercest of them was in power when the Apostle wrote. We cannot assume what are all God's purposes in the institution of civil government. The above extract assumes what is false, even with respect to government as a *creation* of man. It assumes, that every government has originally been created for the purpose of protecting life and property. Of all the governments that ever have existed in the world, this is the case with very few. The implied compact, so much talked of, is a mere phantom. It is unsound, then, to reason from such a compact.

VI. It is not self-evident that Christians have a

right to rebel, even when their rulers most flagrantly abuse their power. It is possible that God may have wise reasons for not allowing them to rebel. If this is possible, the contrary cannot be assumed. God's own declaration only can determine the question. And God has determined it. Even when they are persecuted in his own cause, they are forbidden to fight. They may fly ; but they must not resist.

VII. Another false and most mischievous principle assumed by this interpreter, is, that the peculiar circumstances of the Roman Christians were among the grounds of the obedience inculcated in this paragraph. "In the agitation of passion," says he, "utterly forgetting, or warped by interest, studiously keeping out of view that the circumstances of the Christians in Rome,—a small body,—chiefly of the lower orders, many of them foreigners,—under a heathen government essentially absolute, over which they had and could have no control, and the circumstances of the British nation, with few exceptions, making a profession of Christianity,—under a government administered by men professing Christianity,—essentially free,—on whose management the Constitution gives their subjects the means of making an impression by petition or representation, and whose very existence depended on their will, were by no means parallel,—from the passage before us, they attempted to prove that the existing government was the ordinance of God, its administrators his appointed ministers, and that whoever resisted them violated the law of Christ, and drew down on himself the righteous vengeance of Heaven."

In what part of the document is it stated that the fact that the Christians at Rome were a small body, was any part of the grounds on which the Apostle urged obedience to civil government? Does not this give a reason for obedience, not assigned by the Scripture? Does not the passage rest obedience on a different ground? Is not this to inculcate Scripture duty on grounds of men's own devising? This is forgery. The Apostle urges obedience on the ground that civil rulers are an ordinance of God. Dr. Brown grounds it on different reasons, that in other circumstances would justify rebellion. The Apostle does not say, obey civil rulers because ye are a small body, mostly of the lower orders, many of you foreigners, but because "there is no power but of God." Does Dr. Brown think that obedience, in the most unlimited sense, implies that British freemen when they become Christians, must become slaves like the subjects of the Roman Cæsars? This would be to give rulers more than their due. Our rulers are not powers in such a sense. But should a Cæsar overturn our constitution, or a mad democracy be by an avenging God let loose on us, we must obey. Even such a government, if it actually holds the reins of empire, is of God. Jehovah-Jesus actually sways the sceptre even when it is in the hands of infidels and tyrants. In this view the Christian may have consolation. The Lord God omnipotent reigneth! The disciples of Christ have no need to unite with his enemies in plots to overturn a wicked and oppressive government. If a wicked government is to be overturned, Jesus has instruments fit for effecting his purpose. He de-

grades not the heirs of glory by making them the executioners of his vengeance. If we have grievances, and a right to petition, does unlimited obedience forbid us to use our right? If, according to the admirable constitution of our government, we have influence, does the duty of unlimited obedience forbid us to use our influence?

VIII. Dr. Brown blames those, on his side of the question, in former times, that they did not rest on the fact "that the passage before us has no direct bearing on the limits of civil obedience." This is a false principle. A passage may not speak directly about limits, yet may express a thing in an unlimited sense, unless it is elsewhere limited. Such is the case here. The passage teaches obedience in language that includes every case, except such as are elsewhere exempted. But there is no exemption in any part of Scripture with respect of the right of rebellion. The only exception is with respect to things, that God commands, or that God forbids. We are not to obey government when it commands us to do what God forbids, or to forbear doing what he commands. But in no case are we permitted to take the sword of rebellion. This precept is unlimited in its language, as Dr. Brown himself admits. If it is to be limited, it lies on him to produce the limitation from some other part of the Scriptures. This he has not done; and, therefore, his defence is as invalid as that of his friends in time past.

IX. Another false and most mischievous principle grounded on by this writer is, that Paul had a certain object in view not discoverable from the passage, but

to be learned from the history of the times. "All this misinterpretation," says Dr. Brown, "might have been avoided by attending to the object which the Apostle had in view in these remarks, and to the mode of thinking prevalent at least among the Jewish converts to Christianity, which rendered the prosecution of this object necessary." How is the object which Paul had in view to be known but by his expression? What Spirit told Dr. Brown that such was Paul's object in his remarks? Has he dreamed it? Or was he with the Witch of Endor? This ought rather to be called the art of divination than interpretation. I trample on such reveries. I refuse to know any object of a writer but from his own expression. This is taking the meaning for granted; and, on the authority of that assumed meaning, interpreting the words. It directly begs the question. Can the object of a passage be known before it is interpreted? But by the art of divination, Dr. Brown ascertains the object of the writer, and then interprets his words by this foreknowledge. What has a mode of thinking prevalent among Jewish converts to do with this question? The Apostle is speaking to Christians in general, not exclusively to Jewish converts. Even were it true that Jewish converts held it unlawful to obey a heathen government, and were he speaking immediately to Jewish converts, it does not follow that this was the question. Might not the question and answer relate to obedience in general? Even had the question been directly asked, it does not follow that the Apostle might not in his answer go beyond the question. Is not this almost always the case when the Apostle an-

swers questions? He extends his answer to points not included in the query. Nothing can be more silly than this kind of reasoning. It builds without a foundation. "The whole passage," says Dr. Brown, "is an answer to the question, Are Christians subject to the authority of a government administered by heathens?" This is an unfounded assumption. I demand the evidence. That it is a mere assumption is sufficient for my purpose. But that it is also a false assumption, the passage itself is the strongest proof. *It answers other questions,—that supposed question it answers only in the answer to others. Not a particle of the paragraph has a peculiar reference to such a question.*

The absurdity of this mode of reasoning is still more extravagant, when it is considered that it is not in evidence that the Jewish converts, either at Rome or any where else, thought it unlawful to obey a heathen government. Dr. Brown, indeed, tells us, that it does not follow of course that Jewish converts all at once laid aside their prejudices in this matter. And I say, that it does not follow of course that they retained theirs on this point. How far they retained their prejudices we can legitimately know only from what is recorded. This is not on record as among their prejudices. Dr. Brown ought to know that "*It may be*" can be no ground of proof, though it is very sufficient to answer an objection.

No writer of romance is more extravagant than this Biblical expositor. "It seems highly probable," says he, "though (as Dr. Paley remarks) "neither

the Scripture nor any subsequent history of the Church, present any direct attestation of the fact, that the notions which have in after ages been repeatedly revived of the freedom of the saints from all secular authority, and their rightful dominion over the rest of mankind, like most other errors, prevailed to a certain extent in primitive times." If this is a genuine foundation for knowledge, ignorance is inexcusable on any subject. But no man of a sound well-regulated mind could admit this fact even as a part of his historical faith, without any reference to Scripture truth. Sir Walter Scott's Novels are true history compared with the romance of this interpreter of the Word of God. He calls on us to admit, as a foundation of his interpretation, a fact contained neither in Scripture nor in history.

But it is asserted that, "to such sentiments the Apostle Peter seems to allude, when he exhorts Christians to conduct themselves as free, and yet not using their liberty as a cloak of maliciousness, (sedition, as Dr. Paley interprets it,) but as the servants of God." Peter seems to allude to no such persons. It is to good works in general that the Apostle, 1 Pet. ii. 15, exhorts Christians; and in ver. 16, they are warned not to make their freedom from the law an occasion of indulging in sin. They are freemen, but they are not free to sin. Dr. Paley utterly mistakes, when he renders the word translated *maliciousness* by *sedition*. The word is not to be confined to sedition, but expresses wickedness in general. The freedom of Christians would be made a cloak of wickedness, if they would indulge in sin, under pretence of their

being free from the law. That this is the meaning, is evident, not only from the word, but also from the clause that follows,—“as the servants” (or slaves) “of God.” They are made free by Christ, yet their freedom is of such a kind that they remain the *slaves of God*.

“On the supposition,” continues Dr. Brown, “certainly a highly probable one, of some such sentiments existing, or on the undoubted fact, that in the former opinions of many of the Christians at Rome, there was a natural source of such sentiments, nothing could be less expected, on the part of the Apostle, than a dissertation on the fundamental principles of Civil Government, or on the precise limits within which obedience to a government, founded on these principles, should be confined.” Here we have a *supposition* on which we are invited to build our faith—a *highly probable supposition*, which has not a particle of evidence. ‘If we are perverse, and will not build on the supposition which the learned Doctor has provided for our use, he has a farther resource. What is this? It is the undoubted fact, that in the former opinions of many of the Christians at Rome, there was a natural source of such sentiments. It might as well be alleged, that the passage must refer to the resurrection of the dead; because, as many of the Jewish converts as were previously of the sect of the Sadducees, denied that doctrine. It is not certain even that all the unbelieving Jews at Rome held it unlawful to obey a Heathen government. There is no evidence that even all the Jews in Judea believed such a sentiment. Besides, all these suppositions might be

true, without affecting the question. This principle builds on a number of suppositions—suppositions false; and which, though true, would not bear the conclusion rested on them.

But these suppositions, which, if admitted, will shew us what we are to expect in this paragraph, are viewed in another place as truths not to be questioned. The writer, p. 5, speaks of the things “which *must* have been present to the Apostle’s mind when he wrote it; and to meet which, must have been his direct and primary object in writing it.” Here *suppositions* are converted into *certainties*. But legerdemain is not logic.

We need not look for any peculiar error among the Christians at Rome, as the origin of the instructions here given by Paul, though most of his doctrine was called forth by such occasions. The doctrine of Rom. xiii. 1—7, is as necessary this day to Christians in Edinburgh, as it could be at that time to the Christians in Rome.

X. Dr. Brown’s exposition of this passage confessedly founds on what he calls “a great principle of the interpretation of the Holy Scriptures.” It seems it is not enough for us to know what Paul teaches the Roman Christians on this subject. We have a second question, and must indirectly ascertain whether the same thing is a duty to us. A more wicked and mischievous distinction never was invented for making void the commandments of God. “Our attention,” says the writer, “must now be turned to a question, if possible, of deeper interest and importance. What are these things to us and to Christians gene-

rally, in every country and in every age?" So, then, when we read that the Apostle commands the Christians at Rome to obey civil government, we do not immediately know that we are commanded to obey civil government! We must make this out by examining a long train of circumstances. "That we have a concern in them there is no doubt." Very good, indeed! By similar canons he might have deprived us of all concern in them. But that we have any concern in them at all, we do not know from the fact that what things are said to them are said to us, but from 2 Tim. iii. 16, and Rom. xv. 4. This distinction will afford us a very convenient expedient to deliver us from any duty inculcated on the first Christians. But it discovers gross ignorance of the manner of revelation. Though the Epistle is expressly addressed to the Christians in Rome, it is equally addressed to all Christians. This can be proved in the most convincing manner. The 1st Epistle to the Corinthians is addressed to the Church of God which is at Corinth, and was occasional in its origin, yet in it all Christians are included. It is added, "with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ." Now, if all Christians are addressed in Paul's letter to Corinth, all Christians are addressed in his letter to Rome.

The Epistles were, no doubt, occasional in their origin; but did the wisdom of God, in adapting this to all times and circumstances, lie hid from this theologian? These Epistles are the very same thing to us that they were to those expressly named in the ad-

dress. We learn the will of God from the Epistle to the Romans just as the Romans themselves did. It is true that there is an innumerable variety of difference in circumstances ; but this is nothing to the purpose. The things taught there, in all circumstances, are duty. The Roman Christians were under a despotism, and we are under a free government. But obedience is the same. The powers are, under both, equally to be obeyed. It is shallow thinking to suppose that this implies that freemen ought to yield the obedience of slaves; for the *powers* now have no *power* to command slavery. To throw away our freedom would go beyond the claims of the powers, as well as of the injunction of the law of God. The envyings and strife about teachers and gifts in the Church at Corinth, the case of the incestuous person, the charge of going to law with one another before unbelievers, &c., were all peculiar to that Church, yet the Epistle is expressly addressed to "all that every where call on the name of Jesus Christ." This answers every objection that Dr. Brown's ingenuity has alleged in the present case. There was as much difference of circumstances between the peculiarities of situation in the Church at Corinth and the rest of believers in the world, as there is now between us and the primitive Christians. Yet the same Epistle, occasional in its origin, and employed about the occurrences that took place among the Corinthian Christians, is addressed to all Christians. The same may be said with respect to the second Epistle to the Corinthians. Notwithstanding that it was a letter directed to Corinth, the Corinthians are in this address expressly associated

“ with all the saints that are in Achaia.” Where is this wise distinction now ? It may have subtlety ; but it has no wisdom. Did the Christians of Achaia need the assistance of an exegetical theologian to teach them how to draw instruction from this letter, which, though addressed to themselves, was peculiarly adapted to the circumstances of Corinth ? Must they have a penitent incestuous person to be restored to their fellowship, before they can learn their duty from what is written on that peculiar subject ? The authority to which I have referred, fully establishes the fact, that an epistle to one Church is an epistle to all. It is not left to theological casuistry to determine what the Epistle to the Romans is to all other churches and to all Christians of all ages. In writing to the Church of the Thessalonians, Paul says, “ For this, we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God. And the dead in Christ shall rise first ; then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air : and and so shall we be ever with the Lord.” 1 Thess. iv. 15, 16. *We which are alive.* This shews that Paul includes all Christians of all ages among those addressed by him in his letters to the churches. They who shall be living when Christ shall appear are associated with those to whom Paul immediately wrote.

The same peculiarity of manner Paul employs in writing to the church at Corinth, 1 Cor. xv. 51, “ Be-

hold, I shew you a mystery,—we shall not all sleep; but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; (for the trumpet shall sound;) and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.” Here Paul not only includes in his address the whole body of Christians who shall be living at the coming of Christ, but what he speaks is as peculiar to them, as the fact with respect to the incestuous person was peculiar to those then resident at Corinth. The thing asserted would be true only of such Christians as should be living when Christ shall appear. Where is Dr. Brown’s wise distinction now? It is given to the winds. A man of God should be ashamed of framing an expedient, which makes void the law of God. Let us see what an exegetical theologian would make of this passage, by the rules of his art. “Our first consideration,” says he, “is, what is this to those immediately addressed; and next, what is it to us? To those immediately addressed, it declares that they were not all to die; but some of them would remain alive till the coming of Christ, when they should be changed. But from this we are by no means warranted to conclude directly that all the Christians who shall be on earth at the coming of Christ shall then be changed. How far this may be true, we must indirectly make out by a long and arduous process of reasoning. Let us then apply ourselves to this most important part of the duty of exegesis.” Christians are called on to admire the wonderful wisdom of the manner of revelation. It is such, that in every instance it anticipates the objections of cavillers, and

affords an answer to every perversion. It would appear, then, that the Holy Spirit, by this manner of address, had in view such evasions as that employed by Dr. Brown. It is much to be lamented, that a fact so obvious should lie hid from one whose very profession is to expound the Scriptures, not only to a congregation, but to the students of a large denomination.

Dr. Brown's distinction, however, is not new. In the institution of the Lord's Supper, Jesus says to those who sat at table,—“ Drink ye all of it.” Simple Christians ask no better proof that all Christians should partake of the cup. But an exegetical theologian would soon dispose of their proof. “ Stop a little,” says the Jesuit, “ We are to consider what that expression is to those immediately addressed, and what it is to us. This was addressed, not to all disciples, but only to the Apostles. You cannot, then, on this found the right of all Christians to the cup. Paul, however, anticipates this, and all such sophistry, by shewing us that what was addressed by Christ at the table to those present, was addressed to all Christians. For what Christ addressed to his disciples at table, Paul delivers to the church at Corinth. 1 Cor. xi. 23.

In addressing the Philippian jailor, Paul says, “ Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.” On this ground Christians in all ages preach salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. But a late writer in the Edinburgh Review proves that they are but fools. By the help of Dr. Brown's distinction, he first considers what this address was to the jailor, and

then what it is to us. Because an ignorant heathen is to be saved by faith in Christ, does it follow that the same holds true with respect to people in a Christian country? This distinction, then, ought not to be called a principle of the interpretation of the Holy Scriptures, but a canon to deliver Christians from the doctrines and laws of their Lord.

XI. Dr. Brown assumes, that "precepts must be modified in their application to us, by a consideration of the peculiar circumstances in which they were, and we are placed." This is a false assumption. No circumstance can modify a precept, except so far as such precept is essentially grounded on such peculiar circumstance. In that case, the modification is as applicable to those expressly addressed, as it is to us. There is not the slightest difference. A precept founded on a peculiarity of circumstances with respect to those expressly addressed, is applicable to others only in the same peculiarity of circumstances. The precept has always the same extent. But a precept to persons in peculiar circumstances, is not, in its application to others, to be modified by these peculiar circumstances, unless it is either wholly or in part grounded on such peculiarity. He gives us an example from the case of slavery; but it is a very unfortunate one. "Statements," says he, "made with regard to the duty of 'servants under the yoke,' must be modified, if applied to servants who are by civil privilege, as well as national right, as free as their masters." This example shews very little perspicacity. It is utterly inapplicable. Does he not perceive

that precepts to slaves in the time of the Apostles, are precepts to slaves in all other times. When the precept to slaves is not fully applied to free servants, there is no modification of the precept; for the precept does not apply to such. The precept remains unmodified,—as completely applicable to slaves now, as it was to slaves in primitive times. And as to the instruction which the precept to slaves affords to free servants at present, is it not perfectly the same as it was to free servants at that time?

The learned expositor tells us, that from this passage we ought to believe that “the powers that were, when the Apostle wrote, were ordained of God.” He is willing also to admit, that, in the way of practical instruction, “it naturally enough suggests the thought, along with an irresistible sense of its justice, —if the Roman Christians were called on to yield cheerful obedience to an arbitrary government, at the head of which was a Claudius or a Nero, with what thankful readiness should we perform our duties to a civil government,” &c. Now, were it a fact that all that this passage contains is an assertion that the Roman government was of God, and as such, ought to be obeyed, it is clear as demonstration, that every other government must also be of God. What reason can be given why the government of Nero was of God, if any government is not of God? Were any savage beasts, to whom God ever gave power, more savage than the beast of the Roman empire? But the passage merely *suggests* a certain thought to this expositor, along with a sense of its justice. His duty he does not learn

from it as a divine precept. Does he wish to deliver Christians from the authority of God in this matter, and leave their duty to a sense of justice?

XII. Dr. Brown's exposition of this passage assumes that the duty of obedience is here taught expressly only with respect to the Roman government at that time. This is a false assumption, though the author errs in this in common with expositors in general. The passage *expressly* enjoins obedience to all governments equally. The word rendered "powers," wants the article, and has not an exclusive reference to the Roman government. It comprehends governments universally. Should any of the Roman Christians go beyond the bounds of the empire, the duty of obedience to the government of the country is here as expressly enjoined, as it is to the powers of the empire itself. And the foreigners who may have belonged to countries beyond the limits of the empire, are here taught obedience to the powers of Rome while in the country, and obedience to the powers of their own country, when they should have returned home. The Apostle speaks of "powers" without peculiar reference. This is a fact that cuts the sinews of sophistry.

The writer supposes that it must be exclusively of the *powers* of the empire the Apostle speaks, as he speaks to the subjects of the empire. It is not, however, exclusively to the subjects of the empire the Apostle is speaking, but to all Christians in all ages and countries. Besides, even in speaking to one church, or one individual, it is quite possible to express a precept in such terms as to shew that it

equally applies to all Christians. When, in writing to a friend, I say, *obey government, for there is no government but of God* ; I certainly enjoin obedience to the government under which he is then living ; but as certainly I speak of the duty in terms that equally express it with respect to every government. I speak not exclusively of any government. In like manner, the Apostle here says, “ obey civil authorities, for there is no authority but of God, and the existing authorities are ordained of God.” The Apostle first states the duty as applicable to all civil rulers. Next, he states the ground on which the command rests, as the reason why he gives the injunction. Every government is to be obeyed, because there is no government that is not of God. Lastly, he brings it home to the existing governments. “ The existing governments are appointed by God.” This directly applies to every government of every age and of every country.

XIII. Dr. Brown adopts a principle laid down by Paley, which is a mere assumption, and which takes for granted the question at issue. “ The truth, says he, “ is very clearly stated, and the grounds of it unfolded by Paley ; so long as the interest of the whole society requires it,—that is, so long as the established government cannot be resisted or changed without public inconvenience, it is the will of God (which *will* universally determines our duty) that the established government be obeyed, and no longer. This principle being admitted, the justice of any particular case of resistance is reduced to a computation of the quantity of the danger and grievance on the one side, and of the probability and expense of redress on the other.”

What is the authority of this oracle? Has the author received it at Delphi? Or does he profess to be himself an oracle of God? How has he found that obedience has such a limit? Has the Scripture any where assigned this limit? Is it an exception arising from necessary truth? It is neither. The Scriptures give **no** such limitation; necessary truth says nothing on the subject. We have no ground on which we can rest it, but the word of the sage. I utterly despise such sayings, as I do the ravings of Johanna Southcott. No sane man can say that it is impossible that God could have good reason to oblige his people to obedience to their rulers, though they should be tyrants and oppressors. I demand where Dr. Paley has found the *will* of God in this matter. His doctrine is not Scripture; it is not necessary truth. Did he ascend to heaven and obtain a new revelation? The figments of philosophers are to be despised equally with the dreams of fanatics. Political philosophers have founded their reasonings in support of the limitation of obedience to civil government on mere theory. When Newton gives us a theory of the tides, he does not interfere with the Scriptures, for they are silent on such subjects. But when Dr. Paley grounds obedience to civil government on *public expediency*, while others ground on the absurd supposition of implied compacts, promises, or conventions, they blasphemously contradict God, and presume to free his people from his laws. They found on a theory that overturns the ground on which obedience is rested by the law of God. Can there be a more palpable contradiction between any two writers

than there is between Paul, in this passage, and Dr. Paley, when in limitation of what is said by the Apostle, he impiously asserts that "it may be as much a duty at one time to resist government, as it is at another to obey it." This is not to expound the Apostle, but to contradict him. If on some occasions it is as much a duty to resist government, as at others to obey, certainly the Apostle has been very negligent in this matter. He has no where taught us such a duty. Perhaps he has left this deficiency to be supplied by Dr. Paley and other political philosophers.

Is it not astonishing that Dr. Brown does not see the inconsistency of an expositor pretending to determine the nature and limits of a duty taught in the passage expounded, yet in all his defence of resistance to civil government, he has not a single proof, either from the passage itself, or from any other passage in the Scriptures? To prove the right of resistance, he is obliged to rest on the authority of Paley, and Locke, and Hoadly, as if their reveries were the dictates of inspiration. Are Christians to go to the judgment-seat of Christ, pleading exemption from his law on the authority of the dogmas of philosophers? This is as absurd as it is wicked.

XIV. Dr. Brown tells us that "the present government of this country have no right to their places, if these principles are not true." This is a false assumption. It confounds the right of the present possessors of power with the means by which that power was originally obtained by their predecessors. The revolution might be viewed as a rebellion; while the

Scripture right of the present professors of power remains unaffected. The existing powers are as truly of God, as if the revolution had been effected in obedience to an express command of God. None can grasp the sceptre till it is held out by God. Napoleon and Cromwell were of God, as truly as Jeroboam and Jehu, or even as David and Solomon. Does not Dr. Brown himself assert that the government of a Claudius or a Nero was the ordinance of God to the Roman Christians? Does he think that Cæsar was justifiable in overturning the republic? Does not Dr. Paley also assert that "irregularity in the first foundations of a state, or subsequent violence, fraud, or injustice, in getting possession of the supreme power, are not sufficient reasons for resistance, after the government is once peaceably settled?"

XV. The principle by which Dr. Brown limits a law expressed in unlimited terms, is either false, or nothing to his purpose. It is admitted, that "it is not necessary that where there are exceptions, these exceptions should be all specifically mentioned." The exceptions may be included in a general law as well as in a specific one. The general law "we ought to obey God rather than man," applies to every specific case in which man commands what God forbids, or forbids what God commands. If Dr. Brown can produce to me a general law in Scripture which warrants rebellion in any instance, I will submit to it as implicitly as I would to a specific precept. But he has not attempted to produce any such general law from the word of God. The highest source of his exceptions is the authority of the political philosophers.

“ In reference to Scriptural precepts,” says he, “ it is enough if there are clear, general principles of truth and justice, in a consistency with which all particular precepts must be interpreted ; so that we are warranted to say of any particular precept, however clearly proved to be a divine one, that any meaning which can be brought out of it, which contradicts those principles, cannot be the true meaning.” Here he confounds general principles of truth and justice, as taught in the Scriptures, with general principles of truth and justice, as ascertained by reason. It is by supposing that what is true of the one is true of the other, that the position has an appearance of truth. If by “ general principles of truth and justice,” he means general laws or declarations contained in Scripture, the thing is admitted ; but it is nothing to his purpose. It is just the thing that I have illustrated in the general law, “ We ought to obey God rather than man.” But if by “ general principles of truth and justice,” he means the arbitrary positions of his oracle, the philosophers, then it is entirely denied. It is quite obvious that this must be his meaning ; for this is the only light in which the thing asserted can serve him. The grand principles of truth and justice must be the maxims of Milton, of Locke, of Hoadly, and of Paley. We must limit God’s law, not by any general distinction of his own word, but by the fancy of the philosophers. God will not be allowed to command any thing beyond the opinion of the sages with respect to justice. If Paley and Locke do not relish the meaning of the precept, that cannot be the true meaning.

“ For example,” says the writer, “ there is a precept in the Jewish law, which, at first sight, seems not merely to authorise, but to require human sacrifices. (Lev. xxvii. 28, 29.) The passage admits of satisfactory explanation ; but though it did not, the great principles with regard to the divine character and will, so clearly stated in Scripture, would warrant us to say that any meaning which sanctions human sacrifice cannot be the true meaning.” Now if it is true that the Scriptures absolutely forbid human sacrifice by any thing imported in their general declarations with respect to the character and will of God, the case coincides with what I have already explained. But in this sense it is nothing to his purpose. It cannot serve him, unless the knowledge of the divine character and will, by the authority of which the language of the precept must be explained or limited, is derived solely from reason. Locke and Paley do not ground on any general declaration of Scripture, but on what, independently of Scripture, they judge to be right. Does Dr. Brown think that human sacrifice is so contrary to the divine character as to render it impossible for God to command human sacrifice ? If this is true, then the greatest instance of faith on record is the greatest instance of folly. Abraham should not have sacrificed his son. Had Abraham acted on this principle, he would have denied that the command could possibly come from God. It is true that God did not suffer him to sacrifice Isaac. But God could not command what it is unworthy of him to receive. And he did receive a human sacrifice, when he accepted the sa-

crifice of his own Son. It is not safe to say, then, that no language could, in any instance, enjoin a human sacrifice, so clearly as to warrant a man to believe it. God would do man no injustice were he to sacrifice the whole human race. Against human sacrifice we have not the security of necessary truth. It is enough to say, it is not required, and that therefore it is murder to offer it. On the authority of such maxims, the infidel denies that God could command or sanction the invasion of Canaan, and the extirpation of the inhabitants. They tell us that it is contrary to the eternal principles of justice.

“ There may be cases in Scripture,” says the writer, “ where the only way of fixing the limits of a precept, expressed without exception, which is yet obviously intended not to be universal, is by appealing to such principles, which is just one way of making Scripture its own interpreter.” Now, if the principles referred to are general declarations of Scripture, on which supposition only can it be said that Scripture is made its own interpreter, the observation is not to the writer’s purpose. Does he make Scripture interpret Scripture when he limits the language of Scripture law by the maxims of Locke and Paley? Are the writings of the philosophers a part of Scripture? I have no objection that Scripture should interpret Scripture, and that a general law should limit a particular law; but I will not consent that Locke and Paley shall limit the laws of Jesus Christ.

I state it as an axiom, that *to express a duty without limitation enjoins it without limitation, unless in cases either expressly or necessarily excepted.*

XVI. "The second class of limitations to the obligations of civil obedience," says Dr. Brown, "refer to cases on which the magistrates, of whatever grade, act illegally." Now this assumes what is not true. None of the cases supposed are a limitation of the law in question. If an inferior magistrate acts illegally, to refuse obedience is not to resist the existing powers; for all power ultimately lodges with the supreme authorities, and the supreme authorities do not enjoin obedience to those in office under them, when they go beyond their authority. Paul's conduct in insisting on his privileges comes under this denomination. He had a right not to comply with the request of the Roman governor, and to appeal unto Cæsar. Surely, by appealing to Cæsar he did not resist Cæsar. And in limited governments, the highest executive authority is not the only *power*. Queen Victoria has not *power* to command by proclamation what the Constitution says ought to be done by the legislature. The two Houses of Parliament are essential constituents in the existing powers. But should Victoria, like Cæsar, succeed in establishing a despotism, must she not be obeyed like Cæsar? If God in his providence gives her unlimited power, Christians are bound to submit.

XVII. "The third class of limitations of the obligation of civil obedience embraces all cases in which the magistrate leaves his proper power, and interferes in matters with which, as a magistrate, he has nothing to do." This is a false assumption, and it is mere assumption. As far as it is a limitation of the law, it is comprehended in the first class. It coincides entirely

with the limitation that enjoins us to obey God rather than man. The greatest part of what the author says on this class of limitations belongs to the first class. With respect to the rest, that they are exceptions to the obligation of the law, is a gratuitous assumption. Where do the Scriptures teach, that if a government take under its management temporal concerns which, in the view of others, do not belong to its proper province, subjects are not bound to obey? This is not among the doctrines of Scripture. And it is not a necessary truth. God may have good reasons for commanding us to submit even to unjust power. Has he not actually done so? Slaves are commanded to be subject not only to good and gentle masters, but also to the froward. They are to "endure grief, suffering wrongfully." Even when they do well and suffer for it, they are to take it patiently.

How is it that the Scriptures themselves make the first class of exceptions, but that, to prove the third, Dr. Brown must have recourse to the mere sayings of wise men? If there were other limitations to this duty besides what is included in obeying God rather than man, would not the Scriptures themselves have taught them? Would this have been left to the speculations of Dr. Watts and Mr. Locke on the proper object of civil government? Is it by the sayings of Watts and Locke that Scripture interprets Scripture?

XVIII. In his Note xii., Dr. Brown remarks on the excellence of the Roman law. If this is any thing to his purpose, it assumes that a part of the ground of submission enjoined on the Roman Christians was the excellence of their laws. This is a false assump-

tion, for the Apostle grounds on the fact, that the powers are of God's appointment. Besides, though the subjects of the empire might be ruled by law, as far as subordinate magistrates were concerned, the rule of the emperor was not bounded by law. He was the absolute master of his subjects both as to life and property. Dr. Brown has not as much power over his dog, as Cæsar had over Paul. Dr. Brown could not lawfully torment his dog, nor put him to fight with another dog for the amusement of the mob ; Paul was obliged to fight with wild beasts.

XIX. Dr. Brown states it as a principle, "*that obedience has an alternative,*" namely, the suffering of the penalty. This is a principle absurdly false. The penalty of a law is no obedience to that law. On the contrary it is punishment for disobedience. The suffering of the penalty does not fulfil the law nor please the lawgiver. No lawgiver, either human or divine, ever viewed the penalty of transgression as an alternative for obedience. The penalty is the sanction of law, not an alternative for obedience. This is unsound theology. It virtually denies the necessity of Christ's active obedience as a fulfilling of the law on the part of his people. If the suffering of the penalty of transgression is an alternative for obedience to the law, then Christ's passive obedience was all that was necessary. His holy life might be necessary to fit him for suffering the penalty with acceptance, but not as demanded by the law from the people for whom he suffered. Has Dr. Brown swerved so far from the ancient orthodoxy of the Secession ?

XX. Dr. Brown assumes that the penalty of a law, which ought not to be obeyed, ought to be willingly submitted to. This is a false principle. Duty does not require that we should submit willingly to the penalty of a law, which it would be sinful to obey. We have a right to disapprove of the penalty as much as of the law. We are not indeed to resist, but we are not to approve. The suffering of the penalty is against our will, though we are bound to submit. He tells us that he honours the law by submitting to its penalty. *He honours a sinful law!!* Here he goes as far beyond the law of God, as in other things he falls below it. A law that should not be submitted to, ought not to be honoured. Nothing can be more absurd than to suppose that a law is worthy of honour which is not worthy of obedience.

XXI. In his second note, Dr. Brown adopts a false principle from the celebrated Robert Hall. "The principles of freedom ought, in a more especial manner, to be cherished by Christians: for they alone can secure that liberty of conscience and freedom of inquiry which is essential to the proper discharge of the duties of their profession." Legal liberty of conscience is not essential to the proper discharge of the duties of a Christian; and comparatively in few countries has it ever been perfectly enjoyed. Liberty of conscience is indeed among the most invaluable temporal blessings; but where it is not enjoyed, the Christian has a resource. He is to obey God rather than man.

XXII. Another false principle is adopted from the

same writer in the following words :—“ To die in the cause of Christianity, is the highest honour that can befall any man. To die in the cause of civil liberty is the next.” It is here asserted that to die in the cause of civil liberty is the second highest possible honour. On the contrary, it may be very sinful. Though civil liberty is an invaluable blessing, the man who fights for it in opposition to the powers that God has put over him, fights against God. It is only under *the powers* that a Christian is ever innocent in dying in the cause of civil liberty. Where has Mr. Hall found this sentiment? Is it treasured up in the Scriptures among the sayings of the Holy Spirit? No, it may be met frequently from the mouth of heathens; but it is not recognised by the word of God. Even when a Christian dies in the cause of civil liberty, being lawfully called to the field by the powers ordained of God, he has not obtained the second highest possible honour. On the contrary, to do the smallest service to Christ is infinitely a higher honour than to die for civil liberty in the most righteous cause. Can any thing be more absurd than to suppose that all the men who should die in repelling an invasion of the country, would be more highly honoured than missionaries, who die peaceably after a course of active labours in converting sinners? Mr. Hall’s wise saying is a foolish heathenish saying. It grates upon the ear, as coming from the wisdom of this world, and sounds harshly from the mouth of a man of God.

XXIII. Another false principle is adopted by Dr. Brown from the same writer, in the assertion that

Christian ministers “ cannot explain or enforce the reasons of submission, without displaying the proper end of government, and the expectations we may naturally form from it, which, when accurately done, will lead into the very depths of political science.” The ground of submission to civil government is God’s appointment ; and no tincture of political science is necessary to explain or enforce the duty as it is stated in Scripture. Where ought we to learn the qualifications of a Christian minister ? Is it from Paul or from Robert Hall ? Where do the Scriptures make a knowledge of the very depths of political science necessary to a Christian minister ?

XXIV. In note 6, Dr. Brown adopts the following quotation:—“ It is not to the Bible without note or comment, that Protestants,” he should have said well-informed Protestants, “ appeal as the ultimate standard of religious truth ; but (as their constant practice of interpretation shews) to the Bible, with every note and comment from every quarter,—not from any limited set of so called fathers, or rather from certain digests of opinion from them, which pass over their manifold contradictions of each other and of themselves, but from all those legitimate and necessary helps which are supplied by grammatical, critical, historical, moral, and spiritual considerations, and which regulate our interpretation of every other book.” This Dr. Brown styles “ *true principle of Biblical interpretation.*” But it is a position absurdly false. No man worth arguing with, denies the use and importance of notes and comments on the Bible. But to say that they form any part of the standard with the

Bible is ridiculous. It is the words of the Bible only that are the standard. Notes and comments may assist us in ascertaining the meaning of the book that is the standard ; but it is absurd to say that they are a part of the standard which they assist us to understand. A lawyer exhausts every source of evidence to prove the meaning of a will or of a law ; but still he appeals to nothing as a standard but to the words of the will or of the law. The very nature of a standard implies that it is admitted by both the contending parties, while they have opposite notes and comments.

XXV. Dr. Brown assumes, that it must be proved that the Christian Romans were liable to a religious tax, before the precept with respect to the payment of taxes is even capable of the meaning which he opposes. This is a false principle. Every tax must be included, if no tax is excepted. The words employed to designate taxes have no reference to the object of taxation, or the purposes to which the money is to be converted. It is quite indifferent, in this respect, whether it is to be given for the support or for the persecution of religion. Even were it certain that there had not been previously any direct religious tax, the precept includes such taxes when imposed. It might as well be said that a certain direct civil tax is not included in the precept, because it did not exist at the time of the writing of this epistle.

XXVI. Dr. Brown assumes, that "the command refers to the existing tributes of the Roman empire." This is a false assumption. The command refers to tribute, without respect to times or countries. Should

any of the Roman Christians pass beyond the limits of the empire, the precept was as directly applicable to them in every country as in Rome itself. Besides, all Christians are virtually included in the address. The precept is as directly applicable now as when it was written.

XXVII. Dr. Brown assumes that a religious tax is a thing of a different nature from a civil tax. But as to any idea essential to taxation, there is no difference at all. A command to pay a civil tax, he tells us, is no command to pay a religious tax. Very true. But the precept is not that we should pay *civil* taxes, but that we should pay *taxes*. Dr. Brown's strength lies in distinguishing things that are identical, and in confounding things that are essentially different.

XXVIII. Dr. Brown assumes that the general law, "We must obey God rather than man, limits the precept "pay tribute." This begs the question, which is not a novel thing with this writer. It takes for granted that God has forbidden the paying of some taxes, or that the paying of some taxes is sinful. Is not this the point to be disputed? The first law cannot limit the second, unless certain taxes are forbidden by God to be paid by his people. "We must obey God rather than man, applies to every thing in which God has forbidden or commanded any thing. But God has not forbidden us to pay any kind of taxes. On the contrary, he has commanded us to pay taxes, without subjoining any limitation. The general law, then, as well as the particular law, enjoins us to pay all taxes. We cannot disobey God in doing what he commands.

XXIX. Dr. Brown assumes that the paying of a tax for a purpose conscientiously disapproved by him from whom it is exacted is sinful. This is a false assumption, and proceeds on two false principles, 1st, It supposes that the money given in paying the tax is our own, which we have a right to withhold. This is false. It belongs to the powers, and is demanded by them as a debt ; not asked as a boon. When *the powers* impose a tax, they appropriate so much of the property of the subject to themselves, and it ceases to be the property of the subject. In this light, all powers consider the matter, and this view this law of God sanctions. We pay taxes as debtors. Our consent is neither asked nor implied. Under despotical governments, the lives as well as the property of subjects belong to the despot. God gave the world to the four beasts of Daniel. “ Thou, O king, art a king of kings ; for the God of Heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field, and the fowl of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all.” Dan. ii. 37, 38. We see here that it was the God of Heaven who gave Nebuchadnezzar his kingdom, and subjected to him the lives and property of the nations. “ O thou king, the most high God, gave Nebuchadnezzar, thy father, a kingdom, and majesty, and glory, and honour. And for the majesty that he gave him, all people, nations, and languages, trembled and feared before him ; whom he would he slew ; and whom he would he kept alive ; and whom he would he set up ; and whom he would he put down.” Dan.

v. 18, 19. The Roman beast had the same gift conferred on him by the God of Heaven. When Christians, then, are commanded to render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, there is nothing excepted but what belongs to God. If Christians are unjustly called to suffer death, they have no warrant from God to resist the powers. They may fly, but they must not fight. To carnal wisdom this seems utterly unreasonable, and the wisdom of the world, even in Christians, rises up against it. It cannot permit Daniel's beasts to have their day. It would willingly break the lease that the Most High God has given them. But this is a Scripture truth, that no sophistry can evade. And to the Christian, guided by the wisdom that is from above, there is abundant consolation. If God has given his people into the hands even of tyrants, he has these tyrants in his own hands, and can dispose them to use his people as he pleases. We are sure that they will be used in that manner that will be most for their own good and God's glory. This is enough to know, and is a greater security for our peace, than all the raving speculations that rest liberty on the right of rebellion.

2. This assumption proceeds on the principle, that the paying of a tax recognises its object. This is utterly false. Approbation is neither given nor asked. When the collectors of the Annuity Tax call on Dr. Brown, they will not demand his approbation of the purpose of the tax. "Give us your money, Dr. Brown," they will say, "and keep your conscience to yourself." The powers, instead of demanding approbation with respect to the destination of the tax, dis-

own all interference with the rights of conscience. Nor does the public voice put this construction on taxation ; for the great body of society act on the contrary principle. Dr. Brown must have a peculiarly ticklish conscience, when he starts at a tax as implying approbation of purpose—while the imposers of the tax disclaim such a construction of their meaning—while the collectors make no such demand—while general opinion distinguishes between the paying of a tax and approbation of its object ; and while the Scriptures enjoin the paying of taxes without limitation. He rests all on his metaphysics, and they are extremely bad metaphysics. For the paying of a tax as a debt, by the authority of the powers, is as widely different from approbation of the purpose of the tax, as heaven is distant from earth. We ought to pay a tax for a purpose which we disapprove, because it is a debt, and our approbation is not implied. We ought not to bestow our contribution for the same purpose, because this implies recognition.

XXX. Dr. Brown's doctrine of tribute rests entirely on the supposed essential distinction between taxes for a general purpose and taxes for a specific purpose. This is a false principle. The distinction is a mere refinement, and not a metaphysical difference. There is no essential difference between general and specific taxes. If it is wrong to pay a specific tax, the purpose of which is sinful, it is equally wrong to pay a general tax, one of whose purposes is sinful. The sinful ingredient defiles the whole mass. But Dr. Brown's spiritual chemistry reverses the nature of moral combination ; and, instead of polluting the

whole mixture, he neutralizes, or sanctifies the sinful ingredient by its combination with purposes that are proper. This keystone being picked out, his whole arch tumbles to the ground. Without this, all his machinery is useless. Where do we learn the essential distinction between general and specific taxes? Do the Scriptures teach it? No such thing. On this subject they are entirely silent. Can it be possible that the Scriptures enjoin paying of taxes without assigning any limitation, while there is a class of taxes, the paying of which it is the duty of Christians to resist even to imprisonment and death? If this is a duty, the Scriptures are deficient.

Is the distinction contended for a necessary truth? It is not. It is a merely nominal distinction as far as the nature of taxation is concerned. There is nothing that can defile the paying of a specific tax, that will not equally apply to a general tax. If it is said that the sinful specific purpose is known; I reply, that the sinful part of the general purpose is equally known. Dr. Brown knows as well that a part of the general taxes goes to the support of Maynooth, as he does that the Annuity-Tax goes to the support of the ministers of Edinburgh. If it is said, that the particular application of a general tax is no concern of ours, that government only is accountable, I reply, that the same is the case with respect to the specific tax. We are no more accountable for the one than for the other. Why are we not accountable for the bad application of any part of a general tax? Because we have no control over it; and our approbation of it is not implied. And the same considerations exempt us from

any share in the sinful application of a specific tax. If a specific tax is for a sinful particular purpose, the general tax is for a number of specific purposes, each of which belongs to its nature, and may be as clearly defined as the destiny of the specific tax. If one of the avowed purposes of a general tax is sinful, the general tax is sinful. In like manner, a specific tax may be general with respect to its specific purposes, and though its general object may be good, the whole may be defiled by one sinful provision. In the Poor-Law contemplated for Ireland, for instance, it is said that there will be a provision for poisoning the souls of the inmates of the poor-house, as well as for supporting their bodies. Now, I say, that a Christian legislator should reject the whole law, if it contains the obnoxious provision. A Christian should give his life rather than give it his sanction. Such, I think, is obviously the duty of a Christian legislator, but a Christian subject is to obey the law as soon as it is law. Were I to become a convert to the doctrine of Dr. Brown, I must teach my brethren to go to prison and to the scaffold, rather than pay the poor-law tax, a part of which is destined to support false teachers.

If it is said that to employ a part of a general tax to sinful purposes, is only a misapplication of the tax, I reply, that this is never applicable, except where taxes are applied to purposes not avowed by the imposers of them. It can be no misapplication of a tax, to apply it to any and to all of the purposes to which taxation is avowedly destined. If gambling-houses were avowedly supported by the state, it would be no misapplication of a general tax to apply a part of it to

this purpose. This would be one of its legitimate purposes, however sinful that purpose might be. This plea can serve in no case, except when the general tax is employed not according to the avowed will of the legislature. In such a case, the legislature is as free from blame as the payer of the tax. This distinction, then, on which Dr. Brown has ventured to limit the law of our Lord Jesus Christ, is a mere figment, as unphilosophical as it is unscriptural.

SECTION II.

DR. BROWN'S CRITICISM AND REASONING REFUTED.

Having detected such a multitude of false principles in this work, I might decline any farther notice of it. For the principles being overturned, the doctrine is without foundation. I shall, however, attend to the criticism and reasoning.

The word "power" and "powers" Dr. Brown rightly interprets as signifying rulers; but with respect to the opinion of those who understand it as denoting "magistracy in the abstract," he says that "it is not wonderful, that among thinking men some should have adopted" this meaning. Now, in this I differ so widely from the writer, that I pronounce the opinion referred

to be void of all accurate thinking. The slightest exercise of thought would shew that it is utterly impossible to be subject to magistracy in the abstract. "It rids the subject," he tells us, "of considerable difficulty." Yes; this is its only recommendation. It enables the mind that is disaffected to the doctrine of the Apostle, to evade his meaning. But the evasion is so palpably absurd, that it would be a waste of time to refute it. It is self-evidently false.

In shewing the beauty of this view, the author resolves "magistracy in the abstract," into "the great eternal principles of truth and justice, and order." But the eternal principles of truth and justice, and order, are not magistracy in the abstract. I notice this, to shew that, if there is such confusion of thought and want of accurate discrimination in his reasoning, when he has truth on his side, it is not wonderful that he can so successfully impose on himself, in supporting his favourite opinions. There was no need here to rest on a balance of conflicting arguments, when the error opposed stands refuted by self-evident truth. We may speak of magistracy in the abstract, but how can we be urged to be subject to an abstract thought? Yet Dr. Macknight can find no other way to enable him to evade the apostolical command in this paragraph. "The higher powers," he tells us, "must signify, not the persons who possess the supreme authority, but the supreme authority itself." Was ever a greater absurdity put into words? How could they submit to supreme authority, without submitting to those who held supreme authority? When sensible men condescend to utter

such absurdity, it is quite obvious that truth can yield them no resource. This is a distinction which cannot exist. Dr. Macknight falls into the like confusion of thought with Dr. Brown; for he resolves the supreme authority into "the *form* of government, which is established in any country." Supreme authority is not a form of government, and a *form* of government is not "power." *Power* may belong to any form of government, but *power* is not a *form of government*. Power is the attribute of *persons*, not of *forms*.

I fully agree with Dr. Brown as to the reference of the word translated higher. "The higher powers are just the ruling authorities." Yet I do not rest the conclusion on the same ground with the writer. He tells us very truly that the word itself does not determine the question whether all the authorities, supreme and subordinate, are referred to, or the higher orders of the magistracy, in contradistinction from the lower. He shews correctly that it is applied, 1 Pet. ii. 13, 14, to the first, and 1 Tim. ii. 1—3, to the second. How, then, can it be determined which of these is the proper meaning, Rom. xiii. 1? Why, after telling us that "it is used by the Apostle Peter to distinguish the king or emperor from inferior magistrates, when he contrasts the king, as *supreme*, with governors, as them that are sent by him." Dr. Brown tells us: "Yet it is plain that all that follows in the paragraph, is just the unfolding what is contained in the commencing precept; and it is equally plain, that in the sequel, the Apostle enjoins obedience, not only to the higher authorities in the empire, but to all authorities, down to the despised publican or tax-

gatherer. The term, then, is not distinctive of a species in the class of governors, but descriptive of the whole class of governors." If in 1 Pet. ii. 13, 14, the word in question distinguishes the king from subordinate powers, how can the same passage prove that the word designates all powers? It is, indeed, very plain, that "what follows in the paragraph, is just the unfolding of what is contained in the commencing precept." But what is the commencing precept? It is not "submit to the king as supreme," but "submit to every ordinance of man." The king, as supreme, is then the first in the specification. It is also equally plain, "that in the sequel, the Apostle enjoins obedience, not only to the higher authorities in the empire, but to all authorities;" but it is as plain, that this is not done on the ground that all the authorities are included in the word translated *supreme*. This word is here exclusively applicable to the emperor. The conclusion, then, from 1 Pet. ii. 13, 14, that the word in question has the signification for which the writer contends, is altogether groundless. On the contrary, if the word has the same reference, Rom. xiii. 1, which he shews it to have, 1 Pet. ii. 13, 14, he has refuted himself. Dr. Brown has here committed suicide. When he concludes, "the term, then, is not distinctive of a species in the class of governors, but descriptive of the whole class of governors," so far from arguing legitimately from the authority which he quotes, he argues against its authority, even as it is explained by himself. If the word is applicable in Rom. xiii. 1, in the sense for which he contends, it is not on the ground that it has that sense, 1 Pet. ii. 13,

14, but on the ground that it has not that sense. This surely is not a happy specimen of exegesis in so learned a professor of exegetical theology.

Well, perhaps, his next proof is better. What is it? It is, that "the Apostle is in this case his own best interpreter." If the Apostle interprets himself, his interpretation is indisputable. But how does he in this case interpret himself? Here is the proof. "In the beginning of the second chapter of his First Epistle to Timothy, he exhorts Christians to make "supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, for kings and all *that are in authority*," *ἐν ὑπεροχῇ οὐρανῶν*, a phrase of similar origin and meaning with that under consideration." This is very sufficient proof that the word in question has the signification alleged. But it is no proof that it must have it, Rom. xiii. 1. If the Apostle uses the same word in one place in the first of the meanings, and in another in the second, it cannot be alleged that in any third passage it must necessarily have the second meaning and not the first. As well might an opponent to Dr. Brown take for granted that in the third passage it must have the first meaning, and not the second. When the Apostle uses the word in both significations at different times, he cannot be his own interpreter in this case. Dr. Brown has truth; but he fails in shewing it to be truth. I can give a criterion that will never fail to fix the application of the word. Whenever it designates higher authorities, as distinguished from subordinate authorities, it must have its reference expressed in the context. Whenever it has no such expressed reference, it must have the most ex-

tensive reference of which it is capable, referring to the whole body of the people over whom rulers have superiority. Rulers may be considered either as being over all the people, or some rulers may be considered as over other rulers. When the word in question has this limited reference, the limitation must be fixed by the context.

In the passage quoted above, Dr. Brown considers publicans and tax-gatherers, as included among *rulers* or *powers*. This is an outrage on language. The assertion would grate on the ear of the most illiterate. Such officers are not powers or rulers, but merely the instruments employed by the *powers*.

“No power,” says Dr. Brown, “is just equivalent to ‘no civil magistrate.’” Well, if this is correct, it establishes a truth utterly at variance with the author’s system. It expressly declares that there is no civil magistrate in existence in any country, that is not of God. To prove this, however, is not Dr. Brown’s intention; and, in order to evade it, he labours and distinguishes without a difference. He supposes the term magistrate to be capable of two meanings. “The term,” says he, “may, however, mean, either no individual magistrate, or no magistrate, by whatever name he may be known, or with whatever modification of civil power he may be invested.” Now, here is a distinction without a difference. “No individual magistrate,” is supposed to express a different sense from “no magistrate by whatever name he may be known, or with whatever modification of power he may be invested.” But the expressions have the same sense, and relate exactly to the same thing.

The only difference is, that the one expresses it more emphatically than the other. "No magistrate, by whatever name he may be known," signifies neither more nor less than "no individual magistrate;" and "no individual magistrate," signifies fully "no magistrate, by whatever name he may be known, or whatever modification of power he may possess." This is just the same kind of criticism, as if we should say that the phrase *no man*, may signify either no individual man, or no man of whatever name, rank, possession, country, kindred, complexion, age, size, &c. &c. &c. he may be. Should we exhaust by specification all the varieties in the distinctions among men, still we could make no more of it, than what is contained in "no individual man" or "no man." This is a strange deficiency in metaphysical acumen, in a writer who ventures to limit the unlimited expression of the Holy Spirit, on the sole authority of his metaphysics. "It seems to me probable," says the writer, "that the Apostle's reference is not so much to an individual magistrate, as to all magistrates, by whatever name or modification of civil power they were characterized." Now, where is the difference? If a thing is asserted of every individual magistrate, is it not asserted of all magistrates of all descriptions? "There is no magistrate but of God," is perfectly identical with "all magistrates are of God," with this difference, that the former is the stronger expression.

What is the use of this distinction? It is this. By adding to "all magistrates" the words, by whatever name or modification of civil power they may be characterised," he contrives to turn it from magistrates

to *kinds of magistracy*. “It was not so much,” says he, “with the individual magistrate, as with the kind of magistracy that the Roman Christians were in danger of being dissatisfied.” This is mere Indian juggling, not criticism. “No magistrate” is not equivalent to “no kind of magistracy,” though it includes magistrates of every kind. By this sleight of hand, the assertion is turned from persons to things,—from *the powers* themselves, to the form or kind of civil government. But this is only the first stage in the process of converting the moth into a butterfly. *The kind of magistracy* passes immediately into *the different orders of the Roman government*. “And the Apostle’s statement,” says he, “is, The imperial sovereign of Rome and his subordinate rulers are as *really*, though not in the same sense, ‘of God,’ as David and the elders of Israel.” And this assertion of the divine appointment of all the subordination in the Roman government, is supposed to suit the state of mind that is represented as prejudiced, not against any particular subordination, but prejudiced in favour of a particular family appointed by God—the family of David. “They probably would, at any rate, have preferred a descendant of David to Claudius or Nero; but still the chief ground of that preference was, the first belongs to an order of kings of direct divine appointment, the other does not.”

The words “no power,” refer neither to *kinds of powers* nor orders in government, but necessarily apply to every civil ruler under heaven. No tyrant ever seized power till God gave it him.

In ascertaining the meaning of the phrase “of

God," we have a wonderful specimen of exegesis. There is nothing bolder or more arbitrary in the school of the Neologians. One would think that there could be little difficulty in forming a notion of the import of this phrase. What savage is so rude as to need explanation? What child is so weak, as not to be able to comprehend? When they are told that rulers are "of God," will they not understand that rulers are appointed by God? But a thing must be clear indeed, if sophistry and disaffection cannot pervert it. The meaning of this phrase comes to be a matter of doubt, because the true meaning is not agreeable to carnal wisdom. "It may be said," says Dr. Brown, "of every magistrate that he is of God, by the permission of his providence; but this lays no foundation for a moral obligation to obedience." Here he admits that what God permits, may be said to be of God, and rejects this meaning here, only as it does not lay a foundation for a moral obligation. But I deny that mere permission can be so designated. What I permit, is not in any sense *of me*. Others, he tells us, err by excess, and make magistracy a direct divine institution, like the Jewish theocracy. But is there no way in which all rulers can be of God's appointment, though neither of these explanations should be admitted? Cannot God put into power by his providence, as well as by his word? When a ruler has received his power from the providence of God, is he not of God, as truly as if he had been appointed by an express command, like Saul or David? Is not God said to put down one and to put up another into power? How is this done, but by

his providence? He does it as truly as when he commands the thing to be done. As to God's doing the thing, there is no difference whether he does it in the one way or in the other. There is no power but of God; because it is God in his providence who confers power on every man who holds it.

This, however, does not suit the author's system. He must give a meaning to the phrase that will not so directly discountenance every instance of rebellion. "They are, however, of God," says he, "as they are the result of the principles of the human mind, and the circumstances of nature, which are the work of God, and all of them, so far as they answer the great end of civil government, are the objects of his approbation." Such an exegesis! Verily, if senses so arbitrary may lawfully be imposed on the Scriptures, they are a sealed book to the bulk of Christians. But this explanation is arbitrary and utterly without authority. Is the phrase "of God" ever used in such an acceptation? Would it ever occur to any writer? Shew me, Dr. Brown, a single instance in which the phrase in question has such a sense. It is also as absurd as it is arbitrary. On the same principle, every work of man is a work of God, because man is the creature of God. Besides, he gives a limitation to the reason that the *power* is of God, when the power is said to be of God without exception. There is no power but of God. This applies when the *power* tyrannizes as much as when he reigns in righteousness. Nebuchadnezzar sinned in doing what God raised him up and appointed him to do.

In perfect harmony it can be said that a king is ap-

pointed by God, and that he is appointed by man. David was a king by both appointments. There is no difficulty, then, from the Scripture assertion, that governors are a creation of man.

Were there any doubt at all with respect to the sense in which the power is of God, it would be entirely removed by the next clause of the verse, in which the existing powers are said to be ordained or appointed by God. The power then is of God, in the sense of being ordained or appointed by God. The 4th verse also decides this to be the meaning of the phrase. In this the power is said to *be the minister of God*. Civil rulers are the ministers of God ; if so, they must be of God's own appointment. Does not God choose his own ministers ? Queen Victoria has been appointed by God as truly as was King Solomon.

Dr. Brown understands the words, "the powers that be," as in a direct way exclusively descriptive of the existing authorities. For this, however, there is no ground. That the existing Roman authorities are included is most certain ; for what is said of all the existing powers in the world, must be true of the powers of the country in which resided the persons to whom the Apostle wrote. But the words directly refer to all the powers that existed in the whole world. It is "the existing powers," not "the existing powers of Rome." The words are as immediately applicable to Parthia and India as to Italy. Dr. Brown speaks of it as self-evident, that it was the existing powers of Rome. "Surely," says he, "the governors referred to, must be the governors to whom they were subject." *Surely*, indeed, must the go-

vernors to whom they were subject be included ; but as surely there is no necessity that they should be exclusively referred to. The command may be given in a way that directly includes all governments. And such is the evidence of the expression in the precept. Joseph Wolf will find the command to be the same thing to him in any country of his travels as when he enters the free air of Britain. The Apostle first commands “ every soul to be subject to civil authorities.” *Every soul* directly includes every Christian in every country ; for we have seen that the Epistle to the Corinthians, though addressed by name to the Church at Corinth, was also directly addressed to all “ that call on the name of the Lord Jesus.” So, likewise must be the Epistle to the Romans. The Apostle speaks not exclusively to the Roman Christians, but to all Christians along with those to whom he immediately wrote. “ Higher powers,” are not the higher powers of Rome exclusively, but higher powers without exclusive reference. The ground of this command is then stated, “ For there is no power but of God.” This is a good reason why the Holy Spirit should enjoin obedience to all civil powers,—every one of them is of God. Then after the negative statement, the same truth is stated particularly with respect to all the existing governments in the world. The thing is very disagreeable to the proud heart of man, and quite contrary to the wisdom of this world, that would rather have obedience to government suspended on conditions of which it should itself be the judge. The Spirit of God, anticipating this perverseness, has expressed the doctrine

of obedience in a variety of the strongest forms. No Christian can guiltlessly misunderstand this precept.

“The powers that be,” says Dr. Brown, “have been interpreted by some learned and ingenious men, as equivalent to ‘the authorities that really are authorities,’—the government that deserves the name,—the legitimate power,—the magistrates who possess the qualifications, and prosecute the ends of their office.” He justly denies that this can be the meaning here, while he admits the signification in other places. I deny most absolutely that ever the participle of existence, in any connection whatever, signifies *legitimate*. And when Erasmus Schmidt contends for it, and Raphelius, in certain cases, admits it, there is proof how far learning and ingenuity may be led astray for want of sound principles of interpretation. The examples on which this opinion is founded, are all capable of solution on critical principles, without giving such a signification to the participle of existence. A philosophical acquaintance with language as a science, would have enabled those learned men to see that in such phrases as “authorities that are not authorities,” the verb of existence has its usual meaning. *Existence* is the very thing that is denied to the thing referred to. While they are *authorities* in one view, they are denied as *existing* in another view. The view on which they do not exist as authorities, may be their want of legitimacy; but it may be many other things. It might be want of attention, want of awe, want of talents, or want of any thing else, as well as want of title. When we say of a cowardly soldier, that he is not a *soldier*, we

use the verb of existence in its proper sense. The *αρχας ουκ ουσας*, then, of Sophocles, lays a foundation for no such doctrine as that of Smidt. It is from a want of this philosophical acquaintance with the principles that ascertain the meaning of language, that learned men are so fertile in furnishing a multitude of possible senses for every passage that comes under their criticism. They obtain credit for learning, when they ought to be censured for ignorance. A word or phrase may be ambiguous, but no composition worth a reading can legitimately be capable of a great variety of meanings.

With respect to our translation, "they are ordained of God," Dr. Brown says, "These words are a strong translation of the original words, probably as strong a one as the translators, with a due regard to their conscience and scholarship, could give. The words literally are, "are arranged or set in order under God." Our version is not a strong translation of the original. A more faithful translation could not possibly be given, according to the common usage of the language. It is mere school-boy criticism to insist that a translation should always trace every feature in the literal meaning of words. Words often lose their original features, and assume others not originally belonging to them. That the word in question is often used to signify to *appoint* or *ordain*, cannot be disputed. But I go farther. I tell Dr. Brown, that what he supposes, is no part of the most literal meaning of this word. He takes it for granted that the word translated "ordained," always imports the relative adjustment of parts. But even in its most literal mean-

ing, as applied to external things, *arrangement*, or the ordering of various parts, is not necessarily implied. The word even as applied to external things, may be applied to the fixing of one thing without any relation to another, as well as to the orderly fixing of a number of different parts with relation to each other. It signifies, as originally applied to external things, *to place*, or *fix in a place*, and from this, as applied to objects of mind, to *appoint*, *fix*, *ordain*, &c. It was, indeed, the usual word applied to the arrangement, or drawing up of an army in battle array; but even in this application, *fixing or placing*, was all that was *literally* expressed.

Arrangement or relative fixing of parts was a secondary idea not originally in the word, but obtained by its application to an army. From this many of its derivatives have the idea of *order*, which most literally is not in it. It is unfounded, with many of the lexicons, to represent this as a word of military origin. It is not so. It was from its native meaning applied to military *placing*, and from this, the secondary idea of arrangement has been obtained. In common use, both as to external things, and as to objects of mind, the word is as frequently applied to the fixing of single objects, as to the orderly fixing of a number in relation. Any one who can glance at a Greek concordance will in a moment see the unsoundness of Dr. Brown's criticism. I shall refer only to a few examples from the New Testament. Matt. xxviii. 16, "Then the eleven disciples went into Galilee into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them." What knaves our translators must have been, who did not

render it. "where Jesus had arranged them;" Acts, xxii. 10, "Then it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do." Here the word applies to God's *fixing* or *appointing* of the things that Paul was to do. Acts, xxviii. 23, "And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to his lodgings," &c. Here the word is applied to the fixing or appointing of a day of meeting. But it is useless to multiply examples, the thing is clear beyond reasonable dispute. Even the very expression is exemplified by ὡς ὑπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ τεταγμένος εἰς ταύτην τὴν χώραν, used by Epictetus in his advice to the person who desires to give himself to the study of philosophy. "Consider yourself as placed by God in this very situation." Here there is reference to God's *appointment* or *fixing* of a man in his employment, and the preposition in question is used in the signification of *by*. *Placed* or *fixed by* God, is not *ranged under* God. When Dr. Brown, then, arguing from the literal meaning of the terms, asserts that the original imports that the existing Roman magistrates, from the emperor to the ædile, have been *arranged*, put in order "under God," he employs false criticism. Even literally there is no arrangement in the verb, and *by* is a very common meaning of the preposition. The Apostle refers to the *appointment* of the rulers, not to the *arrangement* of their subordination.

But has not Dr. Brown himself said,—“We apprehend the Apostle's assertion is, the Roman magistrates are appointed by God to rule over you, and the other subjects of the empire.” Is not this the very idea of our translators, that rulers are appointed by

God to rule over their subjects? If this is the meaning, why is it transformed into "are arranged or set in order under God." *Appoint* is not *to arrange or set in order*; *under* God is not *by* God. If the meaning is that rulers "are appointed by God," the meaning cannot be that God has *arranged* the subordination of rulers. Dr. Brown's exposition is as inconsistent with itself, as it is opposed to truth. He brings the assertion to signify that God has arranged the different orders of the Roman magistracy, yet he tells us that the Apostle's assertion is, "the Roman magistrates are appointed by God to rule."

But if all the subordination of magistrates in the Roman empire was *arranged* by God, does not this imply that they were *appointed* by God? Did he *arrange* them without appointing them? But here we have another mystery. When it is asserted that God *arranged* this subordination, it does not mean that he *arranged* it, but that it arose out of circumstances of his arrangement. "They have originated in circumstances of his arranging, and as the best government which, all things considered, the inhabitants of the wide regions included in the Roman empire, can bear," &c. Can truth and sobriety be guilty of such abuse of language? In this way a man may say and unsay any thing. God *appoints* and does not *appoint*,—he *arranges* and does not *arrange*! Human language does not allow us to say that God *arranges* what merely arises out of circumstances of his arrangement. However, if the author takes away what essentially belongs to the assertion, he makes ample amends by giving us a number of other things

which do not at all belong to it. In what part of the Apostle's assertion has the author found that the Roman government was the best, which, all things considered, the subjects could bear? This is apocryphal Scripture. Besides, this apocryphal addition gives a false ground of submission. It grounds on the goodness of the government; whereas the Apostle grounds on the fact, that all governors are of God, without respect to the quality of their government. All of them, so far, are for the good of society, that they are not a terror to good works, but to the evil.

Again, Dr. Brown grounds submission, not only on a consideration not mentioned in the passage, but which itself is not a truth. How does it appear that any people could not bear a perfectly wise and righteous government? It has often been said that nations very licentious in their manners could not bear liberty. This appears to have been swimming through the author's head, when he made the assertion referred to. But these are two very different things. A very licentious people may not be fit to enjoy liberty. This is a good reason for the existence of single despotism; but it is no reason at all that despotism should not be both wise and righteous. A wise and righteous autocrat is surely as fit to govern a nation, in any circumstances whatever, as a foolish and tyrannical one. So far from being less fit, in every respect, he has the advantage. Men may not be able to bear liberty, but they may bear absolute power, wisely and righteously administered. Why then does God send foolish or tyrannical rulers at any time to a nation? For the very purpose of punishing them, not

because foolish or tyrannical rulers are, in certain circumstances, more for the happiness of the people. A Trajan is better fitted to give happiness to an empire than is a Domitian ; but a Domitian may fit the purpose of the Sovereign Ruler of the world better than a Trajan would do. Submission to the Roman government, then, could not be grounded on the consideration that it was as good as the people could bear. It is grounded on the consideration that the government was of God's appointment, though the emperor, whether Claudius or Nero, was both tyrannical and foolish.

Dr. Brown is equally critical in expounding the compound word rendered " resisteth." " Disorders," says he, " throws into confusion this arrangement." This is a most unfortunate criticism. The writer criticises without knowledge, and even without thinking. Even in military things, the word does not signify to *disorder*, or throw the enemy's ranks into confusion. An army may be drawn up in line of battle to oppose another army drawn up opposite to it ; when, instead of disordering the enemy, it may itself be disordered and routed. The compound word, in all military application, has no reference to the derangement of the opposite army, but to the arrangement of the army as drawn up against another army. Instead of denoting the derangement of order, the compound word refers to arrangement as much as the simple verb. The effect of the preposition is not to make the verb imply derangement, but arrangement opposite to some other arrangement.

What is still more unfortunate, the writer is criti-

cising on the verb in question, but is applying that criticism to another word. Any one who opens a Greek Testament will see that the word that corresponds to "resisteth," in the phrase "resisteth the power," is not the same with that which corresponds to it in the phrase "resisteth the ordinance of God." Now, it is the phrase "resisteth the ordinance of God," that the author expounds on the supposition that it contains the other verb. The verb to which the criticism applies can lay no claim to the signification of *arrangement*. It is compounded of the preposition signifying *opposite*, and the verb which signifies to stand or place. There is, then, no room for bringing into the signification of the phrase either *arrangement* or *disorder*. The word signifies to *oppose*, or *resist*. Had the criticism been properly applied, the passage would have translated thus: "He who deranges the power, resisteth or opposes the ordinance of God." Now, what is the meaning of *deranging the power*? Can a single power be deranged? It may be resisted. Besides, it is only on the ground that rulers are ordained or appointed by God, that to resist them, is to resist the ordinance of God. If God merely made the arrangement without appointing the powers, then the power might be opposed without opposing the arrangement. A man might answer, I resist the power, because of its injustice, but I am quite satisfied with the arrangement. The arrangement, then, cannot be the thing said to be appointed by God, as the appointment of it by God makes it resistance of God to resist it.

Were it necessary, I might trace the word in com-

ination with all the prepositions, to shew that it equally refers to single objects, and to different things in arrangement. Arrangement is not in the word in its most literal acceptation ; and those persons who, in every occurrence of the word, think themselves under obligation to trace in it the idea of order in different parts, have not yet learned to criticise. The very word *tax* comes from it as denoting a *fixed* sum *appointed* as a duty.

Our unfortunate translators receive an indignant rebuke from our author for the word "damnation." He suspects that they employed this word from courtly complaisance to King James. And I may suppose, with as good reason, that it was to please this monarch that they translated the same word in the same way, 1 Cor. xi. 29. Far away be every such insinuation with respect to these good and worthy men, to whom every Christian, who speaks the English language, is under so deep obligations. In the latter occurrence, the word, without doubt, refers to those chastisements with which God visited his people, for their abuse of his ordinance. And there is no reason that it should not have the same meaning here. But whatever *judgment* it may refer to, it is undoubtedly *judgment* from God. And even though it includes judgment from God through the earthly powers, it is not, as Dr. Brown supposes, to be confined to this. God may punish this sin not only by the magistrate, but by a thousand other means. I have no doubt that what Dr. Brown suffers from the government for refusing to pay this tax, will be the least part of his afflictions. God will avenge his own law,

and in one way or other it will be a bitter thing for any of his servants to resist his law, and especially to lead others to resist it. If he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven who shall have disannulled one of the least of Christ's commandments, what shall he be called who virtually, by his perverse exegesis, disannuls the grand law of Christ, Rom. xiii. 1—7? The present turn that politics have taken, has made his doctrine popular. The Reviews and periodical press may fill the land with his praise as a martyr for religious liberty; but if he is rebelling against God; and of this there can be no doubt, if the Scriptures are the word of God, he will not with impunity teach the people of the Lord to evade his commandments. His production is a forcing of language from first to last.

Dr. Brown thinks it highly important, in the exposition of this paragraph, to perceive what he calls its logical construction and division. The common view, which he rejects, is,—“Civil government is a divine ordinance,” ver. 1, 2; civil government is intended for promoting human welfare, ver. 3; disobedience will involve in punishment, 4, 5.” The true division, according to him, is,—“The command is contained in the first clause. The first ground of obedience is illustrated in the last half of the first verse, and the first half of the second verse. The second ground of obedience is stated in the second half of the second verse; and its illustration reaches to the end of the fourth verse; while the fifth verse is a short recapitulation of the whole argument.” Notwithstanding the authorities which he produces in support of his

view, it does not commend itself to my acceptance. Its condemnation is written on its very forehead. The slightest inspection of the second verse may convince any impartial reader, that the latter part of the verse is founded on what immediately precedes, and is, by its phraseology, indissolubly clasped to it. The word ἀνθέστηκότες rests on ἀνθέστηκεν, “*resisteth the ordinance of God, and they that resist.*” This phraseology binds the verse together by a connexion that eternally forbids separation. The latter part is no new ground of the command, but is an observation founded on what immediately precedes, shewing the consequence of the *resistance mentioned*. This is quite decisive. But many other reasons forbid this division. The clause beginning οἱ δὲ ἀνθέστηκότες is evidently an appendix to what precedes in the verse, as the clause beginning αἱ δὲ οὐσαι ἐξουσίαι, is an appendix to what precedes in the first verse. It has no appearance of commencing a new ground of the duty inculcated, coordinate with “for there is no power but of God.” The third verse is not a mere illustration of the last clause of the second. It extends to more than the punishment of resistance or disobedience. The negative assertion, that rulers are not a terror to good works, is different from the positive one, that they are a terror to evil works, and an assertion equally important. Besides, the assertion that they who do good shall have praise, is still different from both the others. That rulers are *ministers of God* for good to Christians, is surely as important as that they are ministers to punish what is evil.

Both this division and the common one appear to

be incorrect, though I set little value on the authority of any mode of dividing, for settling the meaning of the law in question. We must first accurately understand the meaning of the separate parts of the paragraph, before we can discover the connexion, dependence, and progress of the thoughts of the writer. Be this as it may, the division that appears most obvious is this. The first clause of the first verse contains the law of Christ, enjoining obedience to civil rulers. The rest of the verse in two clauses, gives the ground of this injunction, or shews why God enjoins obedience. He enjoins obedience to rulers, because rulers are his own appointment,—an observation naturally resulting from this follows. If rulers are God's appointment, to oppose them is to oppose the appointment of God. This enforces the duty by the guilt of disobedience. He that opposes civil rulers, not only opposes them, but also opposes God's ordinance. Another observation appended to this, shews the consequence of disobeying this ordinance of God. "They who resist shall receive," &c. The third verse commences with an observation, exhibiting a fact that proves that rulers are of God, and which anticipates an objection that was likely to occur. *Rulers are not a terror to good works but to the evil.* The assertion that civil rulers, without any exception, are appointed by God, would appear strange, when it was considered that they were heathens, and tyrants, and persecutors. But heathens, and tyrants, and persecutors as they were, they are proved to be of God by their being a terror not to good works, but to the evil. With all their wickedness, they uphold the great prin-

ciples on which society is founded, and on which only it can subsist. The Christian, then, has no reason to dread them; for he does not practice the evil works which they punish, and he does the good works which they approve. This verse shews the reasonableness of the command of submission to government. As if the Apostle had said, do not think this command a hard saying; *for rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil.* If you wish to avoid incurring the displeasure of rulers, do that which is good, and then, instead of being punished, you will have commendation from them.

The fourth verse gives an additional reason why Christians should not think civil government a grievance, but a blessing. *To the Christian he is the minister of God for good.* Instead, then, of submitting with reluctance, he ought to submit with pleasure and gratitude. Indeed, civil government is more for the advantage of Christians, than for that of others. They need its protection more than any other class of men. Were it not for the protection of government, Christians could not live even in the countries where there are the proudest boasts of enlargement of mind with respect to civil liberty.

The remainder of this verse warns the Christian what he may expect from civil rulers, if he does what is evil. *The minister of God bears not the sword in vain.* Not only have rulers power to punish what is evil, but the providence of God takes care to make this power effectual. It is wonderful to consider how the providence of God defeats the best concerted plans of rebellion, and brings the disturbers of society under

the grasp of the magistrate. Were it not that civil government is an ordinance of God, it is not possible that it could subsist.

Dr. Brown grounds his division on the necessity of having but two reasons exhibited in the previous context, to correspond to the summing up in the fifth verse. But it is not fact, that the fifth verse represents the Apostle as summing up all that he had previously alleged. Indeed, according to Dr. Brown's own division, the fifth verse does not sum up the whole contents of the preceding verses. It entirely omits what is said as to the advantage of civil magistracy. However, were it necessary to make the fifth verse sum up every thing contained in the previous context, this could be done more easily according to my division than according to his. The assertion with respect to rulers, as not being a terror to good works, and being a terror to the evil, and their being ministers of God for the good of Christians, would come under *conscience*, as the rest would come under *wrath*. But there is no evidence at all that the fifth verse is a summing up of every particular previously brought forward. The two grounds of obedience on which the necessity of submission is rested in the fifth verse are, that governors are God's appointment, and therefore ought, for conscience sake, to be obeyed, and that they will punish the disobedient, and therefore ought to be obeyed for fear of their wrath.

The assertion in the beginning of the 4th verse, Dr. Brown makes to refer directly and primarily to the Roman rulers, and to other rulers it is applicable only as far as they act in accordance with their office.

This, however, is a false conclusion from the use of the article. The use of the article here is to mark renewed mention of the subject. It undoubtedly implies reference,—reference, however, not to the Roman rulers, but rulers as first mentioned in the beginning of the chapter. These rulers are rulers indefinitely,—all rulers in every country where Christians might be. Had the Apostle commenced with the Roman rulers expressly mentioned, then, doubtless, the reference of the article in the 4th verse would have been to them. But in the first mention of civil rulers, the Apostle speaks of them without peculiar reference, as applying equally to all the rulers in the whole world.

Dr. Brown gives another reason. The Apostle, he says, is stating their duty to *their* governors, “He is a minister of God to *thee*,” &c. Very true; it is to *their* rulers, but it is not exclusively to their rulers at that time and in that country, but includes their rulers, should they go to other countries not in the empire. In Parthia or India would not the rulers be *their* rulers while in the country? Besides, as I have shewn from the authority of the inscription of the 1st Epistle to the Corinthians, to *thee* is not exclusively to *thee of the city, of Rome*, but to thee of any part of the empire, and to thee in any country under heaven. If to *thee* confines the address to those mentioned in the inscription, then it is confined, not to the Christians of the empire, but to the Christians of the city of Rome. The subjects in other parts of the empire, or even in other parts of Italy, could not know from this that the Roman government was *the minister of*

God to them. They must learn this, as Dr. Brown says, we must learn, with respect to our government, indirectly by a consideration of circumstances. When this epistle came into the hands of the other churches, they must learn from circumstances what the Roman government was to them.

Again, Dr. Brown makes this absolutely and unconditionally apply to the Roman power, and to all others only so far as they act in accordance with their office. But, according to his doctrine, even with respect to the Roman powers, this is a voucher for the present moment only. The next day, "the powers" might act in such a manner as not at all to be considered the minister of God. Even from the time that the Apostle's letter was written and the time that it was received, the character of the government might have been so changed, that it might have been the duty of Christians to rebel instead of submitting with gratitude as to the ordinance of God. There is no end to the absurdities contained in this doctrine.

The assertion, however, does not apply peculiarly to the Roman government, but is applicable to every government. The greatest despot on earth is the minister of God for good to Christians. The government of Rome was a cruel despotism, yet Paul often experienced that it was to him the minister of God for good. Even had the assertion been made directly with respect to the Roman powers, it must equally apply to all others. A more cruel despotism can never arise. I may be told of the excellence of the laws. I admit the fact. But the emperor was

bound by no law. He was a furious wild beast that preyed upon every thing that his caprice demanded.

“The only way,” says Dr. Brown’s paraphrase of the Apostle’s words, “in which you can expect to live safely under such a government as the Roman, is, by quietly submitting to the laws.” What a comment! *Such a government as the Roman!* What ingenuity can extract this meaning from the words, “the rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil?” What daring forgery is this! To make the duty of submission rest on a prudential consideration of the strength of the empire, is as truly forgery as it would be to pass a one-pound note for a hundred pounds. Every government has power to be a terror to evil works. If a kingdom were of no greater extent than a parish, it would have equal power to punish disobedient subjects as the Roman empire had. What sort of morality is this that is put into the mouth of the Apostle Paul? It is morality worthy only of the school of Loyola and the Jesuits. Obey, because the government is strong. Does it not follow, disobey when you can do so with impunity.

To the law of submission to civil rulers, Dr. Brown makes three classes of exceptions. In exposing his first principles, I have shewn that his two last classes are not proper exceptions. I now observe, that in labouring to prove his first class, he labours to prove a self-evident truth, which neither needs nor admits proof by reasoning. That God cannot command his people to disobey himself, is a necessary truth, the contrary of which is a contradiction; for it implies

that God commands and forbids the same thing. It cannot be made clearer than it is in the bare statement. Yet Dr. Brown labours this point with the whole strength of his metaphysics. The other two classes that need proof, he fails in proving. This class, which neither needs nor admits proof, he darkens by spurious metaphysical refinement. "The relation," says he, "which subsists between man and God is earlier, and closer, and more permanent than that which can exist between subjects and magistrates." If any one is so dull as not to comprehend the ground on which God is to be obeyed rather than man, surely this reasoning will enlighten him. It seems the author has adopted this splendid reasoning from the celebrated Robert Hall, whom he quotes in a note. "The relation," says that great man, "which subsists between man and his Maker is prior to the relation between magistrates and subjects. It is a more important relation, since all the good a creature can enjoy is derived from it. It differs, too, from every other, in that it is immutable, perpetual, eternal. A man may or may not be the member of a civil community, but he is always the creature of God. For these reasons, political duties, or those which result from the relations of the subject to the prince, must, in their nature, be subservient to the religious. When the commands of a civil superior *interfere with those which we conscientiously believe to be the laws of God*, submission to the former must be criminal; for the two obligations are not equipollent, but the former is eternal, invariable, and paramount to every other. 'Whether it be right,' said the Apostles, 'to

obey God or man, judge ye.'” What is all this refinement, but a splendid way of saying nothing. Had I been quoting it, all the celebrity of the great author could not have restrained me from calling it a fine specimen of metaphysical rant. All this pile of reasoning is a mountain of froth. It is an attempt learnedly to prove what is self-evident, and which is clearer in the statement, than it possibly can be in any supposed arguments. The Apostles, instead of labouring to prove this truth by reasoning, barely submit it, as self-evident, to the understanding of their hearers. “Whether it is right to obey God or man, judge ye.”

But this loose declamation of the Apostles will not satisfy Robert Hall and Dr. Brown. They will give us solid work. They will shew us that it is “for these reasons” we ought to obey God rather than man. They will give us proof for axioms. Like Descartes, they will not believe their own existence, till they can prove it by a train of reasoning. Well, what is the proof proposed to establish this axiom? “The relation which subsists betwixt man and his Maker is prior to the civil relation between magistrate and subjects.” Surely they must be obstinate unbelievers who do not yield to this proof. Does any one, in apprehending the evidence of the assertion, that we ought to obey God rather than man, ever think on the fact of this priority? Has it any thing at all to do in producing the conviction? Besides, is every prior relation necessarily inferior to every subsequent one? The relation of a man to his parents, is prior to his relation to his wife; yet he must leave father and mother, and cleave to his wife. The relation of a daughter to her

parents, is prior to her relation to her husband ; yet she must obey her husband rather than her father.

It is also, we are told, a more important relation. The relation of a son to his father is more important than his relation to his master ; yet a slave, or even a free servant, must obey his master rather than his father. The mere fact of receiving more good from one than from another, is no proof that we ought to obey him from whom we have received the greater good. The man who commands us to do wrong, may have done us more good than the man who urges us to do what is right. Are we then to do the wrong ? The Creator has a right to the obedience of his creatures, independently of the good which he bestows on them.

There is still another reason : “ It differs, too, from every other, in that it is immutable, perpetual, eternal.” Yes, and he might have added, in the language of another sage, “and it is separated from it by the whole diameter of being.” Does any man ever think of this, when he is weighing the evidence of the truth that we ought to obey God rather than man ? Does he ever think of putting such metaphysics into the balance ? Does his mind balance between conviction and doubt till he thinks of the eternity of the relation between him and God ? But the ground of the obligation does not entirely rest even on the eternity of this relation. Were God about to annihilate any of his creatures, it would be their duty to obey him as long as their existence is continued. This profound reasoning, then, is nothing but learned nonsense. It is very possible to speak pompously in proof of self-evident truth, but it is not possible to avoid speaking foolishly. Were there no better proof

for obeying God rather than the civil magistrate, than that which is alleged by Robert Hall and Dr. Brown, the duty would remain unproved for ever. If, according to Dr. Dwight, as quoted by Dr. Brown, "whether we should obey God rather than man, can never be seriously made a question by common sense any more than by piety," why do these men labour in proving what common sense cannot doubt ?

When the Apostles were called in question for disobeying the command of man, opposed to the command of God, they offered no proof by argument ; but left the matter as self-evident to the judgment of their hearers. But Mr. Hall and Dr. Brown will go to the bottom of truth, and will prove by reasoning, that which is self-evident.—"For these reasons," &c. "The two obligations," we are told, "are not equipollent." Very sounding phraseology certainly, and very edifying. The man who is utterly at a loss to feel the force of the evidence in the Apostle's statement, "Whether it is right to obey God or man, judge ye," will have his darkness dispelled, when he is told that "the two obligations are not equipollent." This, I suppose, is an example of "well-interpreted Scripture." But in such a case, instead of there being two obligations differing in power, there is but one obligation. There is no obligation at all to obey man, when he commands us to disobey God. There is no need to have recourse to the balance, to determine the weight of contrary obligations.

Dr. Brown justly observes, that though the verb translated "pay ye," may grammatically be translated, "ye pay," yet that translation is an unnatural one.

Indeed, it is preposterous to suppose that the Apostle first alleges as a reason for rendering personal obedience, that they were already in the habit of conscientiously paying tribute, when in the subsequent verse he enjoins the duty of tribute as specifically as he did the duty of obedience. Besides, "for this cause ye pay tribute *also*," takes it for granted that they were already in the habit of rendering both tribute and obedience for the same reason, instead of urging obedience on the foundation that they already, for that reason, paid tribute. If *even* is chosen as the translation of the Greek particle, instead of *also*, this supposes that tribute is much worse, as a grievance, than is personal obedience, the contrary of which is quite obvious. Some critics appear to value themselves in proportion as they can plausibly deviate from the common translation. Every deviation appears to them an excellence. If ever criticism becomes a science, the labours of such men will be held in the most perfect contempt. True learning and true criticism seldom find reason to differ materially from the common version, or from the common reader; and their aim is not so much to discover truth, as to refute the evasions of sophistry. The aim of modern criticism seems to be, to try how many different meanings may possibly or plausibly be taken out of the same passage, and its chief glory lies in creating confusion.

The next point to settle is, the reference of the phrase translated "for this cause." For what cause? Dr. Brown refers it to what immediately precedes, namely, "not only for wrath, but for conscience sake." It is not necessary, however, that the aspect of the

phrase should be towards what immediately precedes. The reference is often found a good distance in the van. The reference here is evidently to the second verse. They are enjoined to pay tribute for the same cause that they are enjoined to render obedience; and that cause is, "the powers are of God." If God has appointed them, they must be obeyed in the imposition of taxes, as well as in personal submission. To this it is absolutely confined by what follows. The words which succeed, give the same reason in other expressions: "For they are the ministers of God." We have a quite similar instance in 1 Cor. vii. 6. "I speak *this*," &c. What, did he speak by permission and not by commandment? Not what immediately precedes the sixth verse, but what is contained in the second verse. "Let every man have his own wife." *This*, in the sixth verse, looks back to the second verse for its antecedent, and the thing permitted, but not commanded, is marriage.

Dr. Brown gives a learned dissertation on Roman taxation; but, on this subject, it is learning thrown away. We have nothing to do with the peculiarity of Roman taxes in expounding this passage. The Apostle speaks not exclusively of the taxes of the Roman empire, but of taxes without peculiar reference to place or time. As being in the empire, it was a command to those addressed, to pay the taxes of the empire; but the command is contained in such phraseology, that, should they afterwards live in countries beyond the limits of the empire, it is equally applicable. And it was not a command merely to the Christians of Rome, but a command to all that

call on the name of the Lord Jesus. The Apostle does not say: "For this cause, pay ye the taxes of the empire;" but, "pay ye taxes," which applies to Britain and to China as directly as to Rome. He afterwards divides taxes into two classes, which is equally applicable to Rome, and to other countries. However, had the Apostle spoken directly and exclusively of the Roman taxes, could any simple-minded Christian need any other authority to enjoin him to pay the taxes of his own country?

The "ministers of God" here, Dr. Brown makes either "the magistrates who imposed the taxes, or the officers who collected the taxes." They can be neither. Must they not be "the powers." "The rulers," of whom he is speaking in the previous context? The text can admit no other nominative case to the substantive verb, than the "*rulers*," of whom the writer is treating. All others are intruders, and none of them must be allowed to set a foot on this preoccupied ground. Should the verb be obliged to look for its nominative case altogether out of the text, when the text itself so clearly supplies it with one most appropriate? Was not the "power" previously called Θεοῦ διάκονός; why then should he not be the person who is here called λειτουργός Θεοῦ? Can any one be at a loss to recognise the same man under these different names?

What is the "*very thing*" in which the persons spoken of are said to be continually employed? It is obviously *the ministry of God* in civil rule. The antecedent to which ἀπὸ τῆτο refers, is *ministry of God*, taken, as grammarians would say, out of "mi-

nisters of God." Though grammarians have made a rule that seems to justify this kind of syntax, I consider it a blemish in composition. It is, however, very common ; and the Holy Spirit never affects the elegancies of fine writing.

" This very thing," Dr. Brown says, " was the collection of tribute, and God's ministers attending on this very thing were the officers employed in the collections." But no syntax can bring out this interpretation. The text knows nothing either of tax-collectors, or of the collection of taxes. The antecedent must be found in "*ministers of God.*" The "ministers of God" are evidently the "powers" of whom the Apostle was treating. The very thing, then, to which they constantly attend, is not the collection of the taxes, but the *ministry of God* in the affairs of government. " The very thing" must be something either mentioned, or necessarily implied in the text. But this can be no other than the *ministry* of the *ministers* mentioned. Besides, Dr. Brown's interpretation supposes that all the taxes were for the behoof of the tax-collectors.

" This interpretation," says Dr. Brown, " is supported by the fact, that in the following verse the different orders of magistrates are specified ; and the Christians are required to give what, by the arrangement of the constitution, are due to each of them." Slender support indeed ! There is no such fact. The following verse does not specify the different orders of magistrates.

Dr. Tholuck mentions Koppe's way of confining the word to tax-gatherers. Koppe understands the

word translated “ministers” in the narrow sense of tax-gatherers. “Tax-gatherers are divinely appointed; and it is for this very business that they are made.” With respect to this translation, Dr. Tholuck observes, that “much may be said in its favour.” Yet as *λειτεργος*, without farther addition, cannot well be equivalent to *τελωνης*, he prefers the common translation. Dr. Tholuck in this has truth, but he has very weakly defended it. He ought to have said—not that the word cannot *well* have such a signification, but that it cannot at all have it. The word *λειτεργος* cannot designate a tax-gatherer more than it designates a hangman. Even granting that tax-gatherers could properly be called Θεοῦ *λειτεργοι*, *public* ministers of God, in the predicate, they could not be so called in the subject of a proposition. Had they been mentioned by an appropriate name in the subject, any thing whatever may grammatically be asserted of them in the predicate. But when mentioned as the subject of the proposition, they must be designated by their appropriate name. Even the high powers of whom the Apostle is treating, could not be designated by this term in the subject, though they are so in the predicate. “The powers” are ministers of God, but the term *the ministers of God* could not be employed to designate “the powers,” because this is not one of their appropriate names; and because it belongs more commonly to other *ministers of God*. If, as Koppe supposes, *λειτεργος*, is to be taken as the subject, and “of God,” as the predicate, the former must appropriately designate tax-gatherers. Instead of there being much in favour of such an exposition,

no man acquainted with the philosophy of language could ever have suggested it. It is in this way that the word of God is torn and abused by the ignorance of men, under the character of eminently learned critics. No meaning can be so clear that criticism of this stamp may not find an evasion—no meaning can be so absurd or forced, but it may make pretensions to be the dictate of the Spirit. Modern criticism can find nothing definite in its text. Its ambition is to shew how many meanings may legitimately be extracted by ingenuity. A small superiority of probability is all that the meaning preferred can claim over its numerous rivals; and it would be arrogant to express confidence of conviction. In fact, to the question, What is Biblical criticism? The answer may be,—It is the art of expounding the words of the Holy Spirit, so as to evade his meaning in every thing offensive to human wisdom.

In the precept, “render therefore to all their dues,” “the term *all*,” says Dr. Brown, “is to be understood as expressive of a limited universality.” He might as well speak of an *unlimited twenty*. There is no limited universality, more than there is a universal particularity. If he means that the term *all*, applied to persons, does not always imply that every one of the whole human race is referred to, he has not expressed his thought; and had he expressed it, it would have been nothing to his purpose. The reference of the term must always be ascertained by its situation; but it is as truly universal in its reference, when it refers to ten, as when it refers to every individual of the human race. When the Apostle says,

“ These all died in faith ;” the assertion is as really universal, as when he says, “ All have sinned.” Even in Dr. Brown’s own exposition, the word *all* is taken in its whole extent. When he makes magistrates its substantive, he applies it to magistrates universally. Its extent of application is known by its substantive, not by its own meaning.

How, then, are we to determine what is the proper substantive to which *all* refers? Dr. Brown says, “ It is plain the Apostle is here speaking of duties to magistrates ; and that he refers to all magistrates of whatever order, and whatever rights they possessed.” I answer this by saying, it is plain he is not speaking exclusively of duties to magistrates, but of duties to men universally, of which he specifies a certain number. Of different orders of magistrates, or of magistrates as possessing by the constitution different rights, the verse and the paragraph say nothing.

“ In perfect conformity with the idiom of the original,” says Dr. Brown, “ it might be rendered,— Render to them all their dues. Indeed, had it been the Apostle’s object to have expressed the more general sentiment, it is likely he would have employed another expression, (*τοις πασι*, instead of *πασι*.”) I assert directly the contrary. In conformity with the idiom of the original the translation could not be *them all*. Instead of *πασι*, denoting *them all*, and *τοις πασι*, all without reference, *τοις πασι* would be *them all*, or *all* with reference to the persons of whom the writer was speaking. And had the Apostle intended to speak of “ the powers,” he would undoubtedly in this renewed mention of them, have used the article.

When *all* is used without any thing to restrain it, or to direct its bearing to a particular object, it must have the most general substantive that it can admit. *All*, then, must here be *all men*. “Πασι,” says Dr. Tholuck, “is not to be referred to all sorts of magistrates, as Melancthon, Grotius, and others, will have it, but to all sorts of men.”

But even could the syntax of the passage permit it, the word *all* cannot here refer to magistrates, because this proceeds on the footing that taxes are paid to the assessors and collectors of them as a debt due to themselves as their own right. Now this is both false and absurd. The tax is in no sense due to the magistrate who assesses it on the subjects of a government. He does not receive nor enjoy the tax as his right. To him the duty can have no reference. If tax collectors are supposed to be referred to, then they are not among “the powers,” and the taxes are not for their benefit. There is a sense, I admit, in which the tax may be said to be due to the tax collector; but the sense in which Dr. Brown supposes it to be due, is, that it is his own,—his own right conferred on him by the constitution, and to be given him because he is continually employed in collecting taxes,—his own as much as *honour* is personally due to another. Dr. Brown first brings in the tax assessors as magistrates, and under the cloak of those assessors he has contrived to pass the tax collectors, even to the very lowest of the order. The substantive, then, to *all* is evidently *men*. “Render then to all men their dues.” After this he gives a specification of such dues as would be least likely to be considered as dues,

or to be conscientiously paid as such, namely, taxes, fear, honour. Many Christians to this hour, who would put away with abhorrence the thought of evading an ordinary debt, think it no evil to evade the taxes, and to withhold that honour and fear that is due to men in authority. “To him to whom ye owe tribute give tribute: to him to whom ye owe custom give custom: to him to whom ye owe fear give fear: to him to whom ye owe honour give honour.” As if he had said, “Not only pay your ordinary debts, but those debts also that in general are not conscientiously paid as debts.” This is the only view that can give meaning to the particle *then* or *therefore*. The spirit of the passage is to this purpose. Obedience and taxes are due to civil rulers; pay these dues *then* as well as others. It is quite obvious that the Apostle specifies only such debts as would be most likely to be overlooked.

The phraseology, with respect to taxation, instead of describing different orders of magistrates, is here admirably fitted to obviate by anticipation every evasion. The precept is so worded, that it equally applies, whether the tax is considered as belonging to supreme power, or whether the supreme power has appropriated it to certain persons or purposes; or whether it is held in farm by contract. Strictly speaking, taxes are the property of the supreme power, but they are in another view the property of those on whom the supreme power has conferred them, and of those to whom the supreme power has sold them. There is a sense also in which, as I have observed,

we may be said to owe taxes to the collector. In whatever light these taxes are considered, they are enjoined to be paid.

Should it be objected that, if the duty of paying taxes is grounded on the fact that rulers are ministers of God, continually employed in the public service, then it will follow, that no taxes are enjoined to be paid but such as are for the public service, I reply, that the deduction is not sound. It may be a fact that the ground on which God enjoins the paying of taxes to government, is, that government is his own appointment for the good of his people, without implying that they are not to pay any tax but what they judge to be for the public good. He may make "the powers" the judge of what is proper to be paid, and may, in cases of oppression, give no redress to his people but from himself. The security of the Lord's people may be, that the Lord overrules the rulers, and their consolation, that even oppressive taxation may serve his purpose in trying the righteous and in punishing the wicked. Such is actually the case. Both tyranny and oppression serve the purposes of the Most High ; and when they are not for his glory and the good of his people, he can remove them, and replace them with a sceptre of righteousness. A loving father may enjoin his child to yield respect and submission to a teacher, on the ground that this is for the child's advantage, without making any exceptions for cases in which the teacher may not deserve respect and submission. It is quite enough that he can dismiss the teacher when he finds him to act in a manner not deserving of respect and

submission. But as long as the child is under him, he considers it for its advantage to render unlimited respect and obedience.

That the precept in the seventh verse respects *all men*, is confirmed by the eighth verse, which repeats it in a negative form, in order to shew the duty of love to be a debt that never can be fully paid off. "Owe no man any thing, but to love one another." The love of the brethren is a debt that never can be fully discharged. As "*no one*" here, is not *no magistrate*, but *no man*, so in the former verse, *all* is not *all magistrates*, but *all men*.

In expounding the word *fear*, Dr. Brown thus expresses the meaning of the precept. "It is as if the Apostle had said, Reverence the emperor, fear the prætor, respect the quæstor, and beware of treating with contempt even the despised publican. Just as we would say, Reverence the sovereign, fear the judges, respect the high court of parliament, honour the municipal or local authorities, and beware of treating with contempt even the bailiff or the constable." Is the bailiff or the constable among "the powers?" Is the despised publican among the powers? Has not Dr. Brown confined the precept to magistrates? Are bailiffs and constables magistrates? By what process does he bring such persons into this place? And when these bailiffs and constables are placed on the benches of the magistrates, they are not to be feared or honoured with the least degree of fear and honour. They are merely not to be treated with contempt. If they are not to be feared and honoured with the magistrates, why are they ranked with

them? If they are not to be feared and honoured with the magistrates, let them keep their own place. Rank them not with the magistrates. But how do we know that they are not to be *feared* and *honoured* as the text commands? Is it not only of such as are worthy of *fear* and *honour* that the text speaks? Why, I suppose, as the bailiffs and constables are not worthy of *honour* and *fear*, we must not give them more than they deserve, let the text say what it may. The text says, *fear* and *honour*, Dr. Brown says, *treat not with contempt*. Now, is it possible to extract such a meaning from *fear* or *honour*, as *treat not with contempt*? This indeed is an admirable specimen of exegesis. A nobleman *fears* or *honours* his footman, when he does not *treat him with contempt*. What is it that may not be made out of the Scriptures by such lawless exposition!

“Such,” says the author, “appears to me the meaning of these words of the Apostle. They are a strong assertion and enforcement of the duty of payment of tribute on the Christian Romans. They are a reply to the question, are Christians bound to pay tribute to a government administered by heathens? And that reply is a very strong affirmative.” There is no such question implied; there is no such question answered. There is not a line nor a word in the whole paragraph, that has any reference to the question of heathenism. There is not a single observation that in the remotest manner glances at a scruple or prejudice peculiar to Jews. The whole is as immediately applicable to Gentile Christians as to Jewish, and to Edinburgh in the nineteenth century, as to

Rome in the first. Even the very existence of such a prejudice is not known from any part of the whole Epistle, nor from any part of the Bible. I can find no language strong enough to express my abhorrence of such a monstrous figment.

With respect to the limitation of the precept about tribute, Dr. Brown observes :—“ Still, however, we do not deny, that the precept as to tribute-paying may be without limit. All we say here is, this does not prove it to be so.” Well ; but does he not see that if the precept is, as he admits, unlimited in expression, it must be unlimited in application, except a limitation is proved ? Does he need to be informed, that proof lies upon him ? If we have proved the rule, must not he prove the exception ? When we have proved that the precept enjoins the paying of taxes, in language that includes all taxes, we have done all that our cause requires, till he produce a limitation from the same authority that gave the precept. “ If it be unlimited,” says he, “ which certainly is a very improbable hypothesis, this must arise not out of its general nature, as civil obedience, but out of something peculiar to it, as tribute-paying.” The precept is unlimited ; yet this does not arise out of any thing peculiar to it as tribute-paying, more than its general nature as civil obedience. Its being without limitation in its application, is the necessary result of its being expressed without limitation, which is common to it with all similarly expressed precepts. Every precept expressed in unlimited language, must be applied without limitation, except limitation is proved from the same authority. We claim no more

for this precept, than we do for every other precept. Is Dr. Brown so little acquainted with the nature of critical evidence, as to suppose that "a distinct declaration of the lawgiver" is necessary to prove that a precept unlimited in its expression, is unlimited in its application? Does he not know that "a distinct declaration of the lawgiver" is necessary to prove that any thing is excepted from a precept expressed without limitation? With such principles of interpretation he is ill fitted for the duties of Professor of Exegetical Theology. He demands a law to assert that a law extends to every thing contained in its expression!

It is idle to talk of laying incense on a heathen altar, or contributing a faggot to burn a martyr, as the same in nature with the payment of a tax for a purpose not approved of by the payer. There is an essential difference—a difference that any unprejudiced understanding cannot fail to discover. The one implies participation, the other implies no degree of approbation or participation. A Christian is commanded to burn incense to the idol, as a test of his Christianity, implying avowedly that the action is worship. He is commanded to pay his tax merely for the sake of the money. The burning of the incense is his own act of worship. The giving of the tax is the giving up of something that belonged to him, but now, by the authority of "the powers," belongs to others. He has no concern with the object to which it is appropriated, more than he has with the appropriation of the money which he pays in rent. The one is the property of "the powers," as well as the other is of the landlord.

Should any government impose a tax for a sinful purpose, declaring at the same time, that the paying of the tax will be considered as an approval of the object, I think every Christian should refuse payment at the hazard of his life. But the tax which Dr. Brown and his friends refuse, is not a tax, in the object of which he is required to acquiesce. His payment will be accepted, and the law fully obeyed by it, though he should publicly denounce the object. What perverseness, then, does it manifest, to refuse payment on the ground that there is no difference between paying money as a tax, and contributing money, as a voluntary offering !

With respect to the doctrine, that it is sinful to pay a tax "for an immoral or improper purpose, or generally for a purpose conscientiously disapproved of by him from whom it is exacted," Dr. Brown thus expresses himself:—"There is something absolutely revolting to our moral perceptions and feelings, which lie at the very bottom, which form the *ima fundamina* of our spiritual nature, in maintaining the opposite opinion. It is monstrous to suppose that, by any mere human arrangement, not only what was not duty becomes duty, and what was not sin becomes sin ; but what was sin becomes duty, and what was duty becomes sin." This is a sublime burst of indignant metaphysics. And what can stand against the indignation of metaphysics ? Who can hold up his face to vindicate what violates the very essence of spiritual nature ? But stop a little, Dr. Brown. Let me have a word or two with you on this subject, before we are condemned as monsters, on the

evidence of first principles. This is metaphysics ; but it is metaphysics without metaphysical acumen. Its whole force consists in confounding things that are essentially different. It is not mere human arrangement that makes it a duty to pay any tax. Human appointment imposes the tax ; it is God's appointment that makes it a duty to pay it. And in this, what was sin before does not become duty. Before the giving of this precept, it was not sinful in the Roman Christians to pay any tax in the empire. The distinction between a tax to government and a voluntary contribution exists in nature, and had God given no law about it, it would not have implied participation in the object of the tax, to pay it in order to avoid wrath. In that case, they would not have paid an obnoxious tax for conscience sake with respect to the commandment of God, but they would have paid it for wrath's sake. Dr. Brown in his usual manner takes for granted the very thing to be proved, namely, that to pay a tax for a specific purpose not approved by the payer, is in its own nature sinful. He supposes that the doctrine which he opposes pretends to turn sin into duty by human arrangement. Does not this assume, as a first principle, that to pay a specific tax for a sinful purpose is essentially sinful ? Is not this the very point that is disputed ? Take away from the writer this assumed principle, and you destroy the very *ima fundamina* of his lofty metaphysics.

A second limitation to the law of tribute, according to this writer, respects the legality of the imposition and collection of tribute. "They were not morally bound,"

says he, "to pay any taxes not imposed by the authority, to whose province, according to the constitution of the Roman imperial government, this department of administration belonged, nor to pay taxes to any persons but those appointed for the purpose." There is a great want of discrimination in this observation. This is no limitation of the law of tribute; for the law of tribute supposes that the taxes are imposed by the powers, and collected by their authority. If inferior magistrates impose taxes not sanctioned by supreme power, they are not taxes at all in the sense of the paragraph: If they levy taxes without warrant from "the powers," it is not disobedience to "the powers" to refuse payment. There is an appeal to Cæsar as to taxes, as well as with respect to life. To refuse the exactions of piracy, is no exception to the payment of the taxes of government.

A third limitation, according to this writer, is, when civil rulers go beyond the proper bounds of their province. Does he mean the bounds of their province, as ascertained by the constitution of the country? Tell me, Dr. Brown, what are the bounds of the province of Cæsar, according to the constitution of the Roman empire? What is it to which the province of Nero did not extend? What limited his power with respect to either life or property?

In free governments, if the supreme executive exceeds its province, there are "powers" to restrain it. The Queen, with us, cannot impose taxes by prerogative, for she must have, in the imposition of taxes, the co-operation of the two other branches of "the powers." But should the two Houses of Parliament

unite with the Sovereign in giving her the power of imposing taxes by prerogative, I know no law of Christ to deliver us from the taxes so imposed. Under a pure despotism, there is nothing which does not come within its province, and the Christian has no right to disobey, except in things that are sinful. God only is his protection against oppression and tyranny. And is he not a sufficient protector?

But it is obvious that, in ascertaining the bounds of the province of civil rulers, Dr. Brown does not confine himself to the constitution of any civil government. He determines principally, as his quotations shew, from the end of civil government, as ascertained by self-evident first principles. According to this, let the constitution say what it will, a government has no right to be conscientiously obeyed, when it legislates beyond the boundaries that reason prescribes. Now, this is in direct opposition to the paragraph which the author pretends to expound, is not warranted by any other passage of Scripture, and is not a necessary truth. It is quite possible that God may enjoin on his people obedience to their rulers, even when they exceed their proper province in things temporal. I admit that there is a proper province for legislation, and that legislators should not exceed this. But it is a different question, if legislators exceed this, are they to be obeyed by Christians? I believe that our legislators often dabble in matters as foreign to their proper province, as it would be to attempt to regulate the rising of the moon by legislation. Were I a legislator, I would think myself obliged to keep within the just province of legislation; but as a subject, I obey the foolish

laws as well as the wise. Laws that are not sinful, must be obeyed, though they should be grievances. The God who rules the world has an object in the determination of legislators, and he rules in the midst of his very enemies. The madness of legislation fulfils his purpose as well as its wisdom. Dr. Brown has great advantage in my admissions. He appears to have grounded his hopes of success, in recurring to extreme cases. It is extreme cases only that I notice. He thought to frighten his opponents with Juggernaut ; but I admit more than he has demanded. The rulers of this world, in all their folly, as well as in all their wisdom, are fulfilling the purposes of my God.

Dr. Brown supports the limitation of the law of tribute, by the opinion of eminent Christian moralists. They may be Christian men ; but so far as this subject is concerned, they are infidel moralists. For they contradict Scripture, on the authority of their own speculations. Bishop Jeremy Taylor makes it essential to the obligation of payment, that the authority imposing the tax “ be supreme, that the cause be just, that the end be public, that the good be general, that the people receive advantage.” None of these requirements are essential but the first ; and if the first does not exist, the tax does not exist. The supremacy of the imposing power is essential to the existence of the tax, not a limitation of the duty of payment. The other requisites ought to guide the imposers of a tax ; but they have nothing to do with the obligation of the payment of the tax imposed. The good Bishop confounds the duty of the imposers of a tax, with the duty

of the payers of the tax. These two things are as widely asunder, as heaven is distant from the earth. Where does the Bishop and Dr. Brown find their limitations? Do the Scriptures require these prerequisites in a tax, before it is obligatory on Christians? If not, is it Christian morality that limits the laws of Christ, by the fancies of men? This is saying, not proving. It is *free speaking*, not *free inquiry*. It makes free to contradict God. "Bishop Jeremy Taylor," the writer tells us, "will scarcely be accused of being too lax a casuist on questions of this kind." I accuse not the worthy Bishop of lax morality in this matter, but I charge him with utter incompetency as a casuist on this question. He confounds the duty of "the powers," with the duty of the subjects. By this want of discrimination, he virtually sets the Christian loose from the authority of this precept as a law of God, and by making every subject the judge how far he is bound to pay the taxes of his government, lays a foundation for disorder and anarchy. It is very strange with what reverence Dr. Brown submits his understanding to the sayings of wise men, while he has unbounded boldness in modifying the decisions of the Spirit of God. Now, the mere sayings of the first men that ever existed are to me no more than the sayings of an idiot, if they contradict the word of God. To God I delight to bow my understanding, but to mortal man I will never yield. When man teaches me, he must prove. Are the mere sayings of Bishop Jeremy Taylor, President Dwight, Mr. Brown of Had-dington, and John Knox, to be received as self-evident truths, sufficient to cancel or limit the command

of God? Venerable as these men are, their authority can have no weight, when they rashly presume to oppose their own wisdom to the express authority of the Most High. But why did Dr. Brown class Theodoret among those who hold that paying tribute is not of unlimited obligation? The quotation speaks directly the contrary. "It is not our duty," says Theodoret, "to obey the magistrate in every thing; but while we are bound to pay tax and tribute, and to render honour to them who deserve it, should they require any thing sinful, we must determinedly gainsay them." Does this say that the payment of a tax has limitation? Does it not say that tax and tribute are to be paid, without giving any limitation? Is not the exception made by Theodoret the very same that we make. Rulers are not to be obeyed when they enjoin any thing sinful.

To prove that the payment of a tax for an object not approved by the payer is sinful, Dr. Brown asks with indignant astonishment, "Is there no difference in my giving my property for what I consider one of the most important of sublunary things, the maintenance of regular civil government, and my giving my property for one of the worst of sublunary evil things, the desecration of religion, and the perdition of souls." Yes, Dr. Brown, a very great difference between your *giving* and your *paying*. But the ministers of Edinburgh do not ask a gift of you; they demand a debt. To bestow your money for a bad purpose is a sin; to pay a debt is a duty, to whatever purpose the money may be applied. Throughout his whole work, Dr. Brown errs by considering the tax as a

contribution or gift, which he may give or withhold at his pleasure. If it is not a debt, it must be a gift. But the paragraph which he professes to expound considers taxes as debts. If taxes are debts, then the payment of them no more implies approbation of their object than the payment of any other debt involves approbation of the purpose to which it is applied. When a tax is imposed, there is so much of the property of the subject taken from him and appropriated to something else. It ceases to be his as much as the thing which he has sold. The government is lord paramount of all the property in the empire. Dr. Brown is not accountable for the application of the Annuity Tax more than he is for the rent of his house. It may be said, that the rent of a house is appropriated to a good general purpose, the support of the proprietor. But will it make any essential difference, should the landlord appropriate the rent of the house to the support of a pack of hounds, or even to assist a society formed to oppose the Gospel? Would Dr. Brown refuse to pay his rent on such a specific appropriation? He has no more to do with the appropriation of the tax, than with the appropriation of the rent. The money given, in neither case is his. It is debt. The rent is due to the landlord, or to whomsoever the landlord has appropriated it. The tax belongs to the government, or to whomsoever the government has appropriated it. When Dr. Brown takes his house, he is told that it owes three pounds ten shillings annually to the ministers of the city of Edinburgh, and so much to the proprietor.

It may be said that the cases are not parallel; that the house is the property of the landlord, and he has a

right to appropriate the rent to whatever purpose he pleases. And I say the same thing with respect to this tax. It is the property of "the powers," and they may appropriate it as they please. Does not our Lord's command "render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's," imply that the things rendered to Cæsar are his own?

"Eating flesh," says Dr. Brown, "even though offered in sacrifice, if the individual was unaware of this, was quite lawful." The author entirely mistakes the nature of this fact. It is not because he knows that the flesh was offered to an idol, that he is to abstain from it. He might know this and eat it, if no person was likely to be stumbled by his conduct. Neither the devil nor the idol had any right to the flesh. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof;" and neither the devil nor the idol could make the flesh unfit for the use of God's people. But they are not to eat it in any circumstances likely to stumble those who had not their knowledge. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof;" and therefore he has a right to forbid them to use what is lawful, in circumstances that would injure others. They are never to eat it in the idol's temple, in fellowship with idolaters; for though the flesh was still uninjured, yet this use of it implies fellowship with the idol as much as eating the sacrifices implied fellowship with the Jewish altar, as eating the bread in the Lord's Supper implies fellowship with Christ. The sin, then, of eating the flesh did not consist in *knowing* to what purpose it had been previously used; for it is permitted to be used with the knowledge of that abuse.

The lawfulness of eating it, does not consist in ignorance of its previous abuse, but in the fact that it was created by God to be used by his people, and could not be rendered unfit for this purpose by any idolatrous abuses. What has this fact to do with Dr. Brown's purpose?

Besides, even on Dr. Brown's own view of this fact, it does not apply to his purpose. He knows that a part of the general tax is applied to the obnoxious purpose, just as well as he knows that the specific tax is so applied. The support of Maynooth is as well known to Dr. Brown to proceed from the general taxes, as the support of the Edinburgh ministers from the Annuity-Tax. This illustration, then, radically fails; first, because the thing to be illustrated is supposed to be in its own nature essentially sinful. The thing by which it is illustrated is in its own nature essentially lawful. Secondly, because the sin in this illustration, is not in the supposed knowledge, but in the stumbling of others. Thirdly, because there is equal knowledge of the obnoxious object, in the payment of the general tax, that there is in the payment of the specific tax. General taxes would not serve Dr. Brown more than specific taxes, except every avowed particular object of this general tax was approved by him. He might then allege, that all the professed objects of the general taxes being proper, he is not accountable for their misapplication to purposes not avowed by the government. But to support Maynooth is not a misapplication of any part of the general taxes. It is a legitimate and avowed application, according to the law of the country. He cannot plead

ignorance here. Why then does he pay general taxes, seeing he knows that they are partly avowedly employed to sinful objects? Suppose a society existed for promoting the circulation of the Scriptures, embracing also one sinful ingredient among its good purposes, would Dr. Brown support such a society? Why then will he induce men to pay general taxes, that are partly employed for sinful purposes, just as he would induce rats to eat arsenic, by mixing it with things that are palatable? This is miserable casuistry. If it is sinful to pay a specific tax for a sinful purpose, it is equally sinful to pay general taxes, a part of which is for sinful purposes.

Besides, even if all the avowed objects of general taxes were proper, his casuistry cannot save his conscience, if in any instance the misapplication of any part of them is known to him. If the money demanded by the taxes is his own, which he may justly withhold according to his conviction of the propriety of its destined application, he ought to withhold it, whenever he knows that any part of it is appropriated to a sinful purpose. If a society, disowning every improper object, and avowing nothing but what is highly laudable, is known to misapply its funds to sinful purposes, is it to be supported by men of God?

If it is said that he has no control over the application of taxes; and therefore, that he cannot be accountable for their abuse, the same is true with respect to the money demanded by the tax. The constable and the bailiff will not ask his liberty to arrest for the Annuity Tax. And he has the same alternative

in both cases--confiscation, imprisonment, and the scaffold.

“ I cannot see,” says Dr. Brown, “ how any man can conscientiously pay taxes levied avowedly for the support of an unjust war ; and I am sure, a very great part of the subjects of any government are ill fitted to form a true judgment with respect to the character of a particular war.” This is a suicidal argument. I also am sure that the generality of Christians are ill fitted to determine such questions. But for this very reason, I the more admire that law of Christ that frees them from the necessity of such judgment. Were it a duty to be convinced of the propriety of the object of every tax, before they could conscientiously pay it, the Lord would have given them qualifications for the discharge of the duty imposed on them.

Dr. Brown seems to hope for success to his argument, not only by alleging extreme cases, but cases that have never actually occurred, nor are likely ever to occur. Well, I do not object even to this. I will accept every case that can fairly be said to be purely of the nature of a tax. I reject, as unfair, every case that is framed as implying approbation or acknowledgment of purpose. A thing so framed is not simply a tax, which merely demands money, but no recognition of object. He parades with great ostentation the case put by Dr. Watts. Yet the hideous consequences which he draws from it, do not deter me from answering in the affirmative. “ If a heathen prince,” says Dr. Watts, “ impose a tenth penny on all his subjects, as a tax to maintain heathen worship,

would a Christian willingly pay it, and think himself bound in conscience to do it." Most decidedly, yes. I pay the tax as a debt, according to this law of Christ, announced by the Apostle Paul. With the object of the tax I have no concern. Dr. Watts was a great logician ; yet his question originates in want of metaphysical discrimination. It confounds a debt with a gift, and supposes that the paying of taxes implies recognition of their object.

Of the two cases with respect to the conduct of our Lord in the paying of tribute, Dr. Brown has not successfully disposed. The particular case, Matt. xxii. 16-22, does not, indeed, refer to a sinful tax : But the answer, " render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's," includes all possible taxes. Every thing belonged to Cæsar that did not belong to God. Now, we know that God gave the whole Roman world to Cæsar. Did he not give him all that belonged to Daniel's fourth beast ? Did he not give him man and beast as he had formerly given to Nebuchadnezzar ? Whatever tax, then, Cæsar thought fit to impose, belonged to his grant from the ruler of the world. In paying the tax, we give not what is ours, we merely give Cæsar his own. Dr. Brown, indeed, supposes that " the second part of our Lord's precept is equivalent to a distinct prohibition to pay any such tax ; for that would have been to have rendered to Cæsar the things which are God's." But this proceeds upon a false principle. It is grounded on the principle that all things are God's, and on this footing Cæsar could have nothing. It is indeed true, that in one sense all things are God's, but not in the sense of

our Lord's precept. For this divides things between God and Cæsar. All things are God's, but God has given to Cæsar some part of what belongs to himself. All worldly things God has given to Cæsar; all things that relate to conscience God has reserved for himself. From God's gift to Daniel's beasts, we see that all worldly property is given to Cæsar. And when our Lord commands us to give to Cæsar all that belongs to him, we cannot withhold any worldly property that he demands. If it is said that God requires us to honour him with our substance, I reply, that *our substance* can be only that which Cæsar choose to leave with us. If he takes it all to himself we have no substance to give to the Lord, and are required to give none. God has made Cæsar our lord, and we have no property but such as the laws of the country make ours. With this we are to honour the Lord.

Our Lord's answer fixes another point of great importance. It shews that what is paid in taxes is considered by the Lord as the property of the government which imposes the tax. "The things that are Cæsar's." The things given to Cæsar are not ours, but his. Let Dr. Brown justly consider the import of this phrase, and it will relieve him from his qualms of conscience in paying the Annuity Tax. Matt. xvii. 24-27, determines that Christians ought to pay even an unjust tax rather than offend the government. Our Lord was under no obligation to pay the tax demanded of him, yet he submitted to it.

Dr. Brown adopts the language of Bishop Hoadly in the following passage: "All that I have now attempted is to explain what an inspired person wrote;

and if the explanation be just, the censure must light at last on the Apostle himself." There is here either an uncommon want of accuracy of thought or of candour. Even admitting that Bishop Hoadly and Dr. Brown have been successful in showing that the Apostle's language is capable of limitation with respect to civil obedience and the payment of tribute, still it is most certain that the Apostle himself does not here give any such limitation. How, then, can the doctrine of the one be the exposition of the doctrine of the other? Paul teaches submission to government without assigning any limitation. Is the doctrine that teaches the right of rebellion an exposition of Paul's doctrine? Paul enjoins the payment of taxes without excepting any kind of taxes. Is the doctrine that forbids us to pay certain taxes by all the authority of our allegiance to the Lord Jesus Christ, and commands us to suffer confiscation, imprisonment, and death, rather than to yield, the same doctrine with that of the Apostle? Even if they are consistent doctrines, they are not the same. Has not Dr. Brown himself admitted that the language of the Apostle is without limitation? How then does the Apostle come in for a share of the censure that falls upon the Bishop and the Doctor on account of their presumptuous limitations of the Apostle's doctrine? Bad enough, indeed, if the Apostle must first submit to the arbitrary limitation of those writers, and afterwards relieve them of the odium of limitation by taking it on himself. No, no, gentlemen, if you will mutilate the Apostle, you shall not be allowed to make him a *felo de se*, and bring in a verdict against him of self-murder. Paul

has not limited civil obedience in temporal things. Paul has not limited the duty of paying taxes. This is the work of presumptuous men, who will not submit to the decision of the Apostle.

To carnal wisdom the doctrine of unlimited submission to civil government in temporal things, appears a hard saying. Who can hear it? If this sentiment prevails, it may be said, rulers may tyrannize as they please. They who speak thus do greatly err, not knowing the Scripture, neither the power of God in the ruling of the world. It would be a hard thing, indeed, if God did not rule the rulers. But the Christian has nothing to fear, when he considers that every plan and proceeding of government is overruled and directed by his God. If he puts his children into the hands of men, he retains these men in his own hand, and they can injure them in nothing without his permission. So far, then, from being a doctrine that fills the mind with discomfort, it is the only view that gives peace. Have I not more security for my safety in the care of my Almighty Father, than in a permission given by him to defend myself against the oppression of rulers. I have peace whatever party gets into power, because I know that in every thing God fulfils his purposes by them. God rules on earth, even in the councils of his enemies, as completely as he rules in heaven.

When God chooses to overturn the empire of tyrants, he is at no loss for instruments. He is not obliged to employ the heirs of glory in such scenes of blood. He uses the wicked to overturn the wicked. A hangman fills a very useful office, but the Queen

would not choose to appoint one of her royal uncles to the situation. The Sovereign of the world is not obliged to employ his own children as the executioners of his vengeance, when he overturns the thrones of tyrants.

Dr. Brown labours to throw odium on this doctrine, by identifying it with that of those courtly spaniels who formerly taught the divine right of kings. But it is not akin to it in the remotest degree. It looks with no more favour towards the throne of kings than to the empire of republics. It always recognises the persons as God's ministers, who actually possess the power, without any respect to the form of government, or even the quality of government. Wicked rulers are God's appointment, as well as righteous rulers. But shew me an instance in which a righteous nation ever had an unrighteous Sovereign. When nations are sunk in wickedness, even if righteous and wise persons are in power, God will blast their purposes for the good of his people, or he will make even wise men mad.

Those statesmen and rulers who would unsettle the "existing powers" in foreign countries, on the pretence of supporting *legitimacy*, find no sanction in this law of God, more than they who would assist in overturning legitimacy for the establishment of free government. Let those who in any country actually hold the reins of empire, be acknowledged by Christians as long as God retains them in their place. When he changes them, let them submit to the change, "for there is no power but of God." Louis Philip is as legitimate, according to the law of

God, as was Charles X. ; and Napoleon was as legitimate as either. Shall the world be filled with confusion and blood for the sake of the fanciful rights of a particular family, when God has removed them from power ? Can there be a more legitimate heir to power than the heir to whom God has given the possession ?

That baseness of spirit which is ever ready to flatter power, to palliate its vices, and justify or excuse its tyranny, can claim no kindred with the doctrine of this passage. Christians ought to let it be seen that they respect those in power as God's ordinance, but that they do not respect vice or the abuse of power in any quarter. On the other hand, they ought to avoid bringing into contempt the rulers of the country, even when their measures do not please them. This tends to shake the very foundations of society.

If in any country government shall refuse to grant to Christians complete liberty of conscience, they must act on their allegiance to Christ. It is right to obey God rather than man. Should they be called to suffer for their obedience to God, he can enable them to glorify him, by bearing what is inflicted. Here, with a good conscience, we may call on our brethren to submit to confiscation, imprisonment, or death. This limitation is not left to be assigned by Locke, or Milton, or Paley, but is given them by God himself.

Let it be observed that, as the doctrine of this passage does not identify itself with politics, so my object has no political bearing. It is the law of Christ only that I expound. To the law of Christ only do I urge the obedience of Christians ; and this I urge equally on all, without respect to political views, on their alle-

giance to the Son of God, the King of kings and Lord of lords. My doctrine has no partiality for a particular party or particular measures: it disturbs not such partiality where it exists. In all circumstances it forbids rebellion, and enjoins obedience in all temporal things; but it forbids no man to have his preferences as to forms of government, as well as measures of policy, or to co-operate in any legal effort to obtain a civil constitution, with every excellence that wisdom can bestow.

It is of the utmost importance that Christians in every country understand their duty to civil government. In this way they will most effectually commend the Gospel to the world, and remove some of the most powerful obstacles that impede its progress. While they shew that they fear not man, when he commands what is contrary to the commandments of God, they ought likewise to shew that obedience to God obliges them to submission to rulers in all temporal things. If they act according to the instructions of their great king, no government could ever have ground to suspect them, or a pretence to impede their efforts. In the cross itself there is enough of offence; we should not add to it by any contumacy of our own.

Were Christians in this country to compare the blessings of their situation, with that of those on the continent of Europe, instead of charging persecution on the government on account of disagreeable taxes, they would see the most abundant grounds of thankfulness. We have the most unbounded liberty of conscience; but on the Continent Christians may suf-

fer imprisonment and confiscation for preaching the Gospel of Christ. We will give a bad lesson to the rulers of Europe with respect to religious liberty, if we shew them that the use we have made of ours, is to embolden us to refuse the taxes that all others are required to pay. No tax can be justly charged with persecution, which equally bears on all subjects. Our concern for the religious liberty of our brethren in France, Germany, Denmark, and Russia, ought to incite us to make the most prudent use of our own liberty. Were all Christians in Great Britain to manifest proper gratitude for the blessings of religious liberty, it might encourage the rulers of the Continent to communicate the same blessings to their subjects.

The Scripture doctrine of obedience to civil government in temporal things, though, like the Gospel itself, foolish in the estimation of the wisdom of this world, is in reality the wisdom of God. The cross of Christ is offensive to the carnal heart of all men, and the rudest as well as the most civilized nations are inclined not only to reject, but also to persecute it. If in addition to this, the Gospel had intermeddled with the civil concerns of the world, and enjoined its followers to resist whatever they did not approve, the whole world would be shut against it by the civil rulers. On this principle, nothing could be expected but confusion wherever the Gospel came. But in the wisdom of God the heralds of salvation interfere not with the powers that rule the nations, and instead of sounding the tocsin of rebellion, they enjoin obedience to every government in the world, as

being an ordinance of God, so long as his providence preserves its existence. Rulers, then, can have no plausible pretext for persecution, and where they persecute, it is manifest that it is from hatred to the Gospel itself, and not from any just fear of the dangerous tendency of Christianity with respect to the stability of government. This feature in the Gospel revelation is evidently in the divine wisdom intended to display the greatness of the natural enmity of the human heart to the character of God. The salvation of Christ is published in all nations, accompanied with a grand law of the kingdom of Christ, which, so far from trenching on the authority of rulers, holds them forth as God's ordinance, and enjoins obedience to them, as a part of that obedience which is due to God himself. True policy, then, ought to induce civil rulers in every country to countenance the entrance of the Gospel among their subjects. But such is the utter depravity of man, such is his rooted hatred of God, such is his aversion to the divine plan of saving sinners, not by any righteousness of their own, but by the righteousness of Christ imputed through faith in his name, that rulers, instead of hailing its entrance into their dominions, are inclined to shut it out as a pestilence. How important, then, is it for Christians to remove every pretext for opposition, and make it manifest that enmity to the Gospel itself, and not any fear of its consequences in temporal things, influences its enemies! That the depravity of human nature is as great as the Scriptures represent it, is irresistibly proved by the fact, that though they enjoin unreserved obedience to civil rulers, the Gospel has been perse-

cuted in almost all nations. This is one of the strongest internal evidences of the truth of the Gospel. This peculiarity in the doctrine of Christ cannot have been a human device, for it is opposed to human wisdom ; and though it is calculated to serve the interests of civil rulers, their natural aversion to the truth often overcomes their concern for their temporal interests. They will rather fight Christianity than reign peaceably through the authority of its injunctions. The doctrine of obedience to civil government, then, as taught in the New Testament, is a self-evident proof of the truth of Christianity ; and Christians who do not submit to this doctrine, or who do not avow it, do all in their power to hide this evidence of the truth of the Gospel.

Not the least of the evils of such a perversion of Scripture on this subject, as that which is exemplified by Dr. Brown, is the foundation which it lays for overturning, by the laws of a spurious exegesis, the most important doctrines of Christianity. In looking into a late treatise of Mr. Blanco White in favour of Socinianism, I was much struck with the coincidence of one of the canons by the help of which he would degrade the Son of God, with one of the canons of Dr. Brown, by which he would relieve himself from an obnoxious tax. And assuredly this is the legitimate result of false criticism and false canons in every instance. They cannot be kept at the fixed point to which they were designed by their authors to apply, nor restrained from giving their authority to instances not only not contemplated by their authors, but which they would reject with ab-

horrence. This is a fact that heightens the guilt of Dr. Brown. His canons and his criticism would lend their aid to every error. The same canons and criticism issuing from the pen of a Socinian would be comparatively harmless. Every Christian would be on his guard against them. But when canons and criticism calculated to introduce universal disorder into the interpretation of language, calculated to overturn every revealed truth, are ushered into the world by a professor of theology in one of the most orthodox denominations, the poison will be drunk without suspicion; and in the issue the whole system of truth will be corrupted. If the body of the Secession approves of Dr. Brown's canons and criticism, and remain for half a century longer to be distinguished for their attachment to ancient orthodoxy, it will be a kind of miracle. A spurious liberality is more likely to take the place of that earnest contending for the faith that was manifested by those men of God who founded the Secession. I think I see symptoms of a spurious liberality in Dr. Brown himself. I set no bounds to that liberality that ought to exist among all the friends of a pure gospel. But would an Erskine have styled Mr. Locke "an excellent divine"? This expression grated upon my ear, and I bitterly lamented it as affording evidence that the Seceders of Scotland are not what their fathers were. That Mr. Locke was an excellent philosopher, and in many respects a worthy man, no man will question. But no man who respects the standards of the Church of Scotland can consistently call him "an excellent divine." His system of re-

ligion unfolded in his work on the Epistle to the Romans, is the very core of Arminianism, and affords the most plausible expedients to the opposers of truth to evade its evidence. Let there be the most unbounded liberality with respect to the friends of the gospel of God. Let its very enemies get justice. But if an angel from heaven should dare to arraign the gospel, let us not fear to say with an Apostle, "Let him be accursed." To speak of Mr. Locke as an "excellent divine" is to authenticate, not his criticism merely, but his errors.

I think myself the more obliged to bear my testimony against this spurious liberality because it has for some time been in vogue among those who, professing orthodoxy, would willingly lower its pretensions. It is this that has induced me to lift up my voice against the works of Mr. Stuart of America. Under a profession of orthodoxy, this writer has vitiated the fundamental principles of the Gospel, and his admirers in this country have caught the infection from his example. There are comparatively few in any denomination, that are now found to take their stand for ancient orthodoxy in its full extent. The example of Mr. Stuart is most pernicious in this respect. He has lowered the tone of doctrine; and even, in many cases, what he vindicates, is vindicated only as the most probable among doubtful conclusions. His manner is most disingenuous; for, while he virtually undermines a doctrine, he affects to consider that he is only removing certain foundations on which it is usually placed, while he leaves others undisturbed. I proclaim open undis-

guised warfare against all such modes of interpreting the Scriptures. I call on the friends of Scriptural truth to avow it and defend it, in its own heavenly light, without any alloy from the wisdom of this world. The principles and criticism that deliver us from submission to rulers in temporal things, will deliver us from the most important of the doctrines of Scripture. Let us endeavour to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.

Let Christians remember that, if they are commanded to submit to the rulers of this world in all temporal things, they have the consolation to reflect, that these rulers are in the hands of their God.

SECTION III.

REMARKS ON A REVIEW IN THE UNITED SECESSION MAGAZINE.

Since the preceding part of this work went to press, I have seen in the United Secession Magazine, which has just made its appearance, the review of Mr. Haldane's Letters to Dr. Brown, on which I think it right to make a few observations. The reviewer commences with a representation of facts that

altogether astounds me. "It is not a little strange," says he, "that in the nineteenth century of the Christian era, under a government styling itself Christian, occasion should be furnished for *acting* on the principle, WE SHOULD OBEY GOD RATHER THAN MAN; it is still more strange, that the necessity should exist, in opposition to the published sentiments of Christian men and Christian ministers, of *defending* that principle; it is most strange of all, that excellent men and ministers of Christ, for acting on it and defending it, should be branded by their neighbours, with more than Jewish virulence, as pestilent fellows, and movers of sedition, and ringleaders of the rebellious. Is this to be regarded as a doctrine of doubtful casuistry," &c.

Is it possible that truth and candour could make such a representation of the grounds of this controversy? Does Mr. Haldane make it a matter of controversy whether we should obey God rather than man? Has he called Dr. Brown to account for acting on this principle? Has he laid him under the necessity of defending this principle? Has he branded his antagonist for acting on it and defending it? He has not. This is a common principle, as fully recognised by Mr. Haldane, as it is vindicated by Dr. Brown. He has not regarded this doctrine as one of doubtful casuistry. The reviewer, like Dr. Brown himself, begs the question at issue, and takes it for granted that the paying of a specific tax for a purpose disapproved by the payer, is sinful; therefore, it is obeying man rather than God. So far from proceeding on the principle, that obedience to the law of God

may be set aside by the law of man, the Letters referred to, from beginning to end, proceed on the ground that the duty of paying taxes rests solely on the authority of God. The question to be discussed is not, whether in any instance, we are not to obey God rather than man, but whether the paying of a tax avows approbation of its purpose. If Dr. Brown or the reviewer can convince me, that to pay a tax necessarily implies approbation of its object, I will unite with him in calling loudly on all Christians to go to the scaffold rather than pay a tax, whose object they consider sinful. Let us then fight the battle fairly, without any mean attempt to carry the ignorant with us, by misrepresenting the grounds of the controversy. If he shews me any truth which I have not yet seen, I am not afraid to vindicate it against all the churches in existence. I stand up in defence of the law of Christ. I write to benefit the very persons against whom I write. If I have faithfully expounded the law of Christ on this most important subject, it is the interest, as well as the duty, of every Christian to receive it. No temptation, then, shall induce me to discuss this subject, in any degree, with a bearing on political subjects. I am aware of the odium that I am likely to incur by defending a doctrine at present so unpopular. But I have counted the cost. If God is for me, who can be against me? Relying on the power of the God of truth, I do not despair of convincing some of the Lord's people, that their views on this subject are in opposition to the word of God.

What can be the object of this reviewer in proving from an enumeration of Scripture examples that it

is right to obey God rather than man? Does any Christian dispute this? If he thinks that this is the question at issue, he must be so utterly void of discernment, as to be unfit for judging on any question. If he knows that this is not the question at issue, but affects to believe it, in order to carry the ignorance of his brethren with him, it is most foully dishonest. Give me a law of Christ, and I immediately submit. The extent of my allegiance is bounded by the law of God. It is a most disingenuous thing to endeavour to enlist prejudice on either side of this controversy. Let the question be determined solely by its own merits.

On the same ground the reviewer perceives a want of appropriate application in the illustrations in the Letters to Dr. Brown from the mutiny of the fleet at the Nore, &c., and exclaims, "beautiful logic!" Having disposed the premises to suit his purpose, he concludes for his opponent, "therefore non-compliance with the impious and illegal commands of the rulers of the earth is *active* rebellion against both divine and human law, and shall certainly not escape the vengeance of heaven! To obey God rather than man, is to resist both God and man!!" Here the bad logic is all with the reviewer. The object in the passage referred to is to prove the unsoundness of the distinction between what is called *active* and *passive* resistance. And are not the illustrations quite in point? They are most appropriate for the purpose for which they are employed. But the writer does not, as the reviewer represents, employ these illustrations to prove that it is rebellion against God not

to pay taxes. Whether it is rebellion against God not to pay a particular tax, depends upon the fact, whether God has commanded his people to pay taxes without exception. Let the reviewer then affix another mark of admiration to his observation. But let him not forget to warn his reader that it is pointed at his own want of discrimination.

I need not run over all the instances of fearful consequences that the reviewer draws from his opponent's illustrations. They are not legitimately drawn. "Who does not perceive," says the reviewer, "that the above passage obliterates the distinction between Divine and human government, elevates the edicts of the potsherd of the earth to an equality with those of the eternal, and prostrates with one blow the prerogatives of conscience and of God?" What bombast! What emptiness! What folly! If Mr. Haldane has done so much at one blow, a second blow, I think, must have destroyed the very universe. But the illustration from the mutiny, and the fact with regard to Saul's sparing Agag, bear only on the point with respect to the futility of the distinction between *active* and *passive* resistance. They have no aspect towards the distinction between Divine and human government. As far as these illustrations are concerned, the writer might teach that it is sinful to pay a tax when its object is sinful. This reviewer is exceedingly obtuse in his intellect. Yet it is most amusing to see how he affects the philosopher. He plunges into the very depths of metaphysics. But I will not suffer him to emerge. I will drown him in the whirlpool of his own metaphysical distinctions. "Mr. Hal-

dane's disposition," says he, "to blend divine and human authority, occasionally leads him even into wilder extravagances than the above passage contains. In one passage, for instance, he shews that he is incapable of seeing a difference between the united disposition of a people to set aside or change their existing government, and the general disposition manifested by the French nation at the Revolution; to set aside the fourth commandment. In Mr. Haldane's code of morals these occupy the same category of rebellion against God !!!" Here are three marks of admiration. Let them be increased five hundred times, and I will affix them all to this remark of the reviewer. There is no extravagance here. There is no essential difference between setting aside the fourth commandment in Exodus xx. 8-11, and the commandment in Rom. xiii. 1-7. If God enjoins on every soul obedience to the existing powers in Rom. xiii. 1-7, to set aside that law and justify rebellion, is as truly contrary to God's authority, as it would be to abolish the Sabbath. Attempts may be made to reconcile Rom. xiii. 1-7 with the right and duty of rebellion. Equally plausible attempts have been made to show that the Sabbath is only a Jewish institution. What has the united disposition of a nation to do with the authority of the law of Christ? Can the united disposition of the French nation justify a breach of the law Rom. xiii. 1-7? Saying is one thing, and proving is another. The reviewer may, in his lack of proof, call out extravagance, and make a copious use of marks of admiration. But this can succeed only with those who do not think.

Throughout the whole, the reviewer proceeds on a mistake or a misrepresentation of the question at issue. "How any individual," says he, "who knows his right hand from his left, can persuade himself that to countenance and support sin by the payment of money, is less a subject of moral responsibility than to do so by any other means, is beyond our ability to explain. Does the law of God, which takes cognizance of thoughts, words, and actions, exclude the use of our property alone from its domain?" Remarks of this kind are beneath criticism. Does any man maintain that it is right, in any circumstances, to countenance sin? Do the letters contain any such sentiment? I ask the reviewer, who it is that teaches that Christians are not responsible for the use of their money? Is there no end to his misrepresentation? We hold that a Christian is responsible for the use of every shilling which he possesses. Who is this anonymous calumniator, then, who represents the contrary? Does any man urge the paying of taxes, on the supposition, that in many instances the paying of them countenances sin? Do we not expressly declare that we justify the paying of all taxes, because it is the divine commandment, and the paying of them does not imply approbation of their object. If our opponents will not receive this, but will eternally repeat their slander, we must regard them as devoid of principle and candour. Cease, then, to misrepresent and to argue the matter on grounds that we do not hold. The lengthened proof that the reviewer gives of the truth, that we are accountable for the use of property, is no more to the purpose than a calculation in algebra.

The Letters having admitted that it is not sinful for a Christian to pay a tax for Juggernaut, while they teach that it would be sinful to fire a salute in honour of the idol, or to employ the hands in dragging the idol-car, the reviewer draws the following conclusion : " A Christian, it seems, may do what he pleases with his money, provided he keeps his hands from sinning." Is this honest? Is the conclusion legitimate? Who teaches that a Christian may do what he pleases with his money? The ground of the distinction referred to is, that the payment of a tax implies no approbation of its object, but to assist in the worship of an idol is idolatry.

" Let us examine for a moment," says the reviewer, " this great discovery in Christian morals. A tax for a specific purpose being one of which the purpose is *specified*, and avowed and proclaimed in the law by which it is ordained, it necessarily follows, that that purpose must be known to all from whom it is exacted; the very terms of the demand describe the purpose of the tax; yet, says this modern Solomon, the law of God absolves the Christian from any inquiry into that purpose." Where is the inconsistency here? The reviewer takes it for granted that the purpose of the tax being known, it must be sinful to pay it. Does not this take for granted the thing to be proved? He states his doctrine as a self-evident truth. We aver that the knowledge of the sinful purpose of a tax does not hinder us from paying the tax. If our doctrine is wrong, let this be proved. Its falsehood is not to be taken for granted, or the opposite forced on us by marks of admiration.

The contrary has been proved, and has not been rebutted.

But the reviewer proceeds:—"In other words," says he, "God tells his people that they should ask no questions about the destination of the tax; and though they know all about it without asking, yet, as they can easily pretend to be ignorant, they should just pay, and say nothing about it." *Pretend to be ignorant.* Have the Letters said, that when we pay an obnoxious tax, we ought to pretend to be ignorant of its object. Does not the reviewer know that we defend the paying of a tax, with the fullest knowledge of its obnoxious purpose?

"Mr. Haldane," says the reviewer, "further contends, that the government requires from its subjects no sanction of the purposes for which a specific tax is exacted, or to which it is applied. This is not true." Why is it not true. I assert, it is true. Now, let us come to the grapple. The reviewer, however, has proof at hand. "Laws," says he, "usually contain preambles, setting forth the necessity, or importance, or excellence of the purposes for which they are made." But does a preamble, setting forth the necessity, or importance, or excellence of the purpose of a law, demand that all who obey such a law, should acknowledge the necessity, or the importance, or the excellence of the law? It does not. The reviewer confounds things as different as light and darkness. The preamble contains the view of the purpose of the law, in the estimation of those who make it, but does not imply that this is the estimation of those who submit to it. But he tells us, that "these preambles are

addressed to rational beings, and must therefore be designed to receive the approbation and sanction of the subject to the purposes in view." Very true. No doubt this is their design. But a design to produce a certain opinion in men, and to require the profession of a certain opinion, are things as different as any two things in nature. The least degree of discrimination will discern this distinction. Nothing can be more easy than to put this question to an infallible test. Will Dr. Brown be allowed to pay the Annuity Tax, and at the same time protest against its object? If any tax for a purpose disapproved, is so imposed, as to imply approbation, I consent that it shall be resisted. In such cases, it is not purely of the nature of a tax, which is satisfied with payment, but is designed as a snare to test principle.

"But though it were true," continues the reviewer, "that government does not require the subject to sanction the destination of a specific tax, is the conscience of the subject thereby relieved?" What has brought the conscience into jeopardy in paying a tax, if approbation of it is not implied in the paying of it? And how can approbation be necessarily implied in the paying of it, if approbation is not demanded? if even disapprobation may be expressed? "Will government," asks the reviewer, "answer for him before the bar of God, for doing an action which his conscience condemns?" Is not this a begging of the question? Why does his conscience condemn this action? Does not this take the sinfulness of the action for granted?

"Or has the law of God," continues the reviewer,

“ not merely absolved him from inquiry into the moral character of certain actions, but absolved him also from consistency, and warranted him to do what he esteems sinful, merely because he is not required to *approve* of his conduct ?” There is a host of errors here. God’s command to pay a tax without respect to its purpose, does not imply that we are not to form our judgment of the moral character of its purpose. What does the writer mean by being absolved from consistency ? Does he suppose that we teach that a man should pay a tax while he believes that it is sinful to pay it ? We teach no such thing. We abhor the sentiment. What does the reviewer mean by not being required to *approve* his own deed ? The approbation in question respects not his deed ; for of his own deed his approbation is necessarily implied. It respects the purpose of the tax, of which the payer may disapprove.

On the distinction between general and specific taxes, the reviewer observes :—“ A *general* tax, every one knows, who knows the meaning of the English language, is *avowedly* raised for *one* purpose, and that a good purpose, the general support of civil government.” This is a mere quibbling on words. The purpose of a general tax is *one*, merely as a whole, consisting of different parts. A general tax is for every purpose to which it is avowedly applied. I presume I have said in the preceding work, what is fully sufficient to convince any impartial reader on this subject.

“ If, then,” continues the reviewer, “ the rulers apply it to any other particular purposes than those

which are comprehended within the legitimate sphere of civil authority, they *misapply* both the money and the tax." Is it a misapplication of a general tax, to apply it to any of the avowed purposes for which it is raised? But even if it is misapplied, why is the general tax to be paid after its application to sinful purposes is known? If it is our money and not a debt, why do we continue to give it, after it is known to be misapplied? Would we do so, were it a contribution? And if we pay a general tax because we are compelled, why may we not pay a specific tax for the same reason?

"But what if this law," asks the reviewer, "by which a tax has been imposed, be a profane usurpation of the prerogatives of God?" I answer, if it is, let it be disobeyed. "What," the reviewer continues to ask, "if it be a direct violation of the prior and paramount law of the Creator, which no legislature, therefore, has a right to make, and to which no human being has a right to consent?" I answer, if it is, let it be disobeyed. We must obey God rather than man. But I humbly ask the sage reviewer, what is the authority on which we should believe that taxes of any kind are of this hideous nature? Has not the contrary of this been proved in the Letters? But I need not ask the question. He has already given the answer most precisely. *He has given us his solemn word for the truth of the opinion.* "Yet this," says he, "is the just character of every tax exacted specifically for a sinful purpose." If saying is proving, there never was a more convincing writer than Dr. Brown and this reviewer. He speaks of the

analogy between a tax and a debt. He might as well speak of the analogy that the structure of the parts of one horse has to that of another horse. A tax is a debt in the true sense of the word. Does not the Apostle say,—“Render then to all their dues,” and in exemplification adds,—“Tribute to whom tribute, custom to whom custom?”

The reviewer closes his examination of the Letters with some observations on the censure of Dr. Brown's canon with respect to the necessity of certain kinds of previous knowledge, in order to be able to understand any portion of Scripture. The Letters assert that no circumstances, in reference to Rom. xiii. 1—7, “are to be taken into account in applying the duty to times and places.” How does the reviewer rebut this? Why, he contents himself with asking, if Mr. Haldane, in writing his Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, divested his mind of all knowledge, but that which he acquired from the Bible: if the knowledge of the original and the mother tongue is included in the censure, &c. This is mere trifling. Are these things among the prerequisites specified by Dr. Brown? There is almost no kind of knowledge that may not be useful to an expositor of Scripture, for illustration, confirmation, &c. &c. But this is quite a different thing from making a knowledge of antiquity, not afforded by the Bible, essential to the understanding of what it reveals. In fact, the canon referred to makes the Bible a sealed book, not only to the illiterate, but also to the learned; and not only the Bible, but every book of every age, except the one in which we live. On this principle, I can-

not, for instance, understand one of the most perspicuous books ever written, the papers of Addison in the Spectator. Why do I not understand them? Because I have not a knowledge of the age in which they were written. And why have I not this knowledge? Is it not to be obtained from books? But without the prerequisite knowledge, I cannot understand these books. All the books must be equally unintelligible, till I bring with me the prerequisite knowledge. Where, then, am I to get it? I say nothing at all as to the means by which we must understand Moses. To what antiquarian shall we have recourse to illuminate the darkness of this primitive writer?

Upon the whole, this review has utterly failed in relieving Dr. Brown. It has not delivered him from one of his difficulties. It is one of the most disingenuous productions on which I ever set my eyes. From first to last, it proceeds on the supposition that Dr. Brown's opponent contends that Christians ought to obey man rather than God. Can he be ignorant that this is a foul calumny? If he does not mean to deceive the people, why does he prove what his opponents hold as firmly as he does himself, and which, in its nature, is a self-evident truth? "That the principle of obeying God rather than man," says the reviewer in the April number, "and conduct clearly founded on this principle, should have, first of all, furnished ground of heinous offence to a man who ever published, and never retracted, such sentiments as follow, was truly an approach to something new under the sun. 'Civil government cannot be a Divine

ordinance to regulate men in matters of religion and conscience,—*with these it has nothing at all to do.*”

“When the laws of men run counter to the laws of God, *they cease from that moment*, in so far as they do so, *to be binding*; and with the Apostles Peter and John, we may appeal to all rulers, elders, scribes, and priests, whether it be right, in the sight of God, to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye.”

Was ever any calumny more groundless than this? Can any thing but a malignant disposition find any inconsistency between the sentiments referred to, and opposition to Dr. Brown’s views on the doctrine of obedience to civil government? Does Dr. Brown’s opponent now renounce the sentiments referred to? Does he now hold that, instead of obeying God rather than man, we should obey man rather than God? Does he now hold that civil rulers have a right to direct Christians in the worship of God? Has he expressed any thing like this in his Letters to Dr. Brown? Does he not hold as strongly as Dr. Brown, or, as language can express the sentiment, that no government is to be obeyed when it commands what God forbids, or forbids what God commands? Shall we, then, have no end to this calumnious mode of defending Dr. Brown? Can our opponents more clearly manifest their own sense of the weakness of their cause, than by their constant endeavours to uphold it, not by argument, but by misrepresentation, and virulent personalities? The reviewer would have done Dr. Brown and his cause more service, if, instead of misrepresenting his opponent, he had been able to defend his positions. But this he has not

done in a single instance. This he has not, in many instances, even attempted. Why, for instance, has he not attempted to defend the use which Dr. Brown has made of the circumstances of the Roman Christians as a *small body, many of them foreigners, &c.* which has been so powerfully assaulted in his opponent's Letters. Has not this been shewn in them to be "*the very sum and substance of all the statements of the Rationalists*"? The substance of these Letters the reviewer has not met at all.

Why has not the reviewer attempted to vindicate that impious canon of Dr. Brown, by which he teaches that the Epistles of the Apostles are one thing to those addressed by name, and another thing to us? Can ingenuity devise a more effectual plan to make void every part of the Word of God? Does it not overlook a most striking peculiarity in the manner of revelation? The law was immediately given to the generation of the Israelites who were with Moses in the wilderness. Yet it was equally addressed to all generations of them as they appeared in the world. "The Lord thy God will raise up *unto thee* a prophet from the *midst of thee*, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him *ye* shall hearken." Deut. xviii. 15. Here we see that the whole house of Israel is considered as one body; and in addressing those present he speaks what applies to the Israelites in the time of Christ. "Unto *thee*,"—"from the midst of *thee*,"—"unto him *ye* shall hearken." That generation was commanded to hearken to him, but the things of which he speaks were to be verified in a very distant generation. In the same peculiar manner our Lord addresses the Jews of his

time as addressed in what was immediately spoken to Moses. “ Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven. But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken *unto you* by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. God is not the God of the dead but of the living.” Matt. xxii. 29–31. Here what was immediately spoken to Moses is said by our Lord to be spoken to those whom he addressed. “ That which was spoken *unto you*.” How awful, then, is it for Dr. Brown to invent a distinction in the application of the law of Christ with respect to the first Christians, and those of all other generations !

If the discussion of this subject is to be continued, let us hereafter discuss it on its own merits, without any mean artifices to misrepresent the grounds of the controversy, or to mislead the simplicity of the people. Let us employ every effort to expound the law in question faithfully according to the laws of language, and not according to the traditions of the fathers. But it is not by anonymous squibs in a Magazine that this question can be settled. It is one of great importance, and demands the fullest consideration. It is a question of awful moment, as it respects obedience to God, and for the peace of the world. Let the controversy then be conducted on both sides with the deepest impression of our responsibility before the Son of God. If the mode of attack exemplified in

this review is continued, and if anonymous misrepresentation and personality is to be substituted for argument, we shall hold the editor of the Magazine responsible, and answer him as the author by name.

I have examined Dr. Brown's principles of interpretation, with his criticism and reasoning. Let me be met, then, upon every point, and let my opponent, step by step, defend what I have attacked. I have no object but to ascertain truth, and bring all my Christian brethren to obey this most important law of our common Lord. Again and again, I beseech my brethren to consider, that it is the law of Christ for which I contend, and that it is the interest of all Christians to hear and obey it.

Dr. Brown has incurred a fearful responsibility in this matter. If he is wrong, he is guilty in no ordinary degree. What would be the consequence if all dissenters should act upon his doctrine? Should I become his convert, instead of teaching my brethren in Ireland to pay tithes as they do other debts, I must teach them to suffer confiscation of goods and imprisonment of person rather than submit. What would be the consequence if Dr. Brown's brethren of the Irish Secession should become his converts? On his principle it would be impossible for a Christian to live in a heathen country. Is it a light thing to fill the world with confusion, by acting on a sentiment which is not warranted by Scripture? It is a serious thing to disturb the government of a country; it is a serious thing to involve the people of God in persecution by an ignorance of his law. I entreat my brethren, then, to pause and reflect and thoroughly

examine the question in the light of Scripture evidence, before they lend their names to the disturbers of the repose of the world. Shew me a law of Christ, and I will risk all consequences. But I cannot court popularity by trampling on the most express authority of the Lord Jesus Christ.

APPENDIX.

MR. MENZIES, in defending himself as the translator of Tholuck's work on the Epistle to the Romans, alleges my authority, with that of several others, in extenuation of the guilt of his author in charging error on the writers of Scripture. The most careless reader, however, may perceive, that in the passage to which he refers in my work on the Principles of Biblical Interpretation, it is an occasional want of conformity to the usual rules of syntax, according to the best use of the language, that I admit to be exemplified in the inspired writers. But while certain forms of speech found in Scripture are admitted to be deviations from the rules of syntax, according to the best use, they are recognised by me, without exception, as the words of the Holy Spirit, *intentionally* employed in the divine wisdom. I ascribe such forms of speech, when employed in the Scriptures, as much to the inspiration of God, as I do the finest instances of sublimity. And I find equally in both a manifestation of the divine wisdom.

Human wisdom naturally concludes, that if God would communicate a revelation to men, the book that contains it would be the very perfection of eloquence, according to the highest requirements of art. The wisdom of the heathen world alleged that if Jupiter would speak to men, he would use the style of Plato ; and many have demanded the perfection of the art of eloquence in the Bible. While some have thought themselves entitled to reject the Scriptures as a revelation from God, from the imperfections in their style ; others have thought they were serving the cause of Christ, when they endeavoured to defend the grammatical accuracy and rhetorical perfection of every thing contained in Scripture. God has poured contempt on human wisdom ; and whilst in some of the perfections of style, the Scriptures immensely exceed any human writing, they want others that art demands.

While I have, on several occasions, defended the doctrine of the inspiration of the Scriptures, without the exception of a single word in the original, I am in the habit, as often as an occasion offers, of strongly stating, that this does not imply the invariable perfection of Scripture style, according to the rules of art. I do so, because instead of considering the deviations from grammatical or rhetorical rules, an objection to the inspiration of Scripture, I am convinced that it is only on the ground that grammatical and rhetorical perfection is not necessary in the words of the Holy Spirit, that inspiration can be vindicated. Some persons are startled when they hear any kind of imperfection to be admitted in the language of Scripture.

I am glad to find such jealousy for the honour of the word of God. Yet these fears are unfounded, and their wisdom betrays the very cause they would defend. They are guilty of the very error that they condemn in those who deny verbal inspiration. They who deny verbal inspiration, rest on the theory that such inspiration is not necessary ; and therefore, that such inspiration was not given. They who labour to vindicate every expression of Scripture as being conformable to the rules of grammar and rhetoric, do so on the supposition that the Scripture, if it is verbally inspired, must have every perfection of style. Now, whether the style of Scripture is perfect or imperfect, with respect to the rules of art, can never be lawfully determined by a theory, but must be ascertained as a matter of fact. The man, then, who admits that the doctrine of inspiration implies that the language of Scripture must be faultless as to the rules of art, betrays the book of God into the hands of its enemies, and enables the infidel to reject it on good grounds, as well as the opponent of verbal inspiration to deny its verbal inspiration. In these circumstances, every instance that can be pointed out, in which a Scripture expression does not manifest conformity to the laws of syntax or rhetoric, is fatal to the doctrine of verbal inspiration.

But if the subject is viewed in the light in which I have always held it forth, the defender of verbal inspiration is not disturbed with any number of instances which deviate from grammatical or rhetorical rules. Our first principle is, that language may be inspired by the Holy Spirit, which does not perfectly observe

the rules of grammar and rhetoric. The fact is as clear as the light of heaven, and no competent judge will deny it, that the rules of human art are not always observed in the compositions of Scripture. If, then, we cannot hold verbal inspiration, consistently with this fact, we must be obliged to give it up. The view which I have given of this matter leaves no difficulty on the subject; and I am glad that Mr. Menzies has given me an opportunity to explain my view fully on a point so necessary to be understood.

With respect to the extent of the existence of Hebraisms in the New Testament, I have never pledged myself. But if ever I shall have time to finish the work on the Principles of Biblical Interpretation, from which Mr. Menzies quotes, I must discuss that subject, as it has been made by Scripture interpreters a source of interpretation.

As some have thought that an inspired language must be the very perfection of art, so others have represented barbarism as its essential characteristic. This was the doctrine of the celebrated Dr. Warburton, who was fully refuted by Dr. Leland of Dublin College. The great error on both sides is, that men judge from theory and not from an actual examination of the facts. Dr. Warburton's theory is absurdly false, and his proofs are a most violent distortion of facts. Judging from the Bible itself, my verdict is, that in every excellence of style that is founded on the constitution of man, the Bible goes immeasurably beyond all writings. In simplicity, in sublimity, in vehemence, in energy, in pathos, in tenderness, &c. &c. no human writings can be compared with the book

of God. In these things, compared with Scripture, Homer and Milton are but vulgar authors. But in excellencies merely conventional, the language of the Holy Spirit does not deign to court admiration. This criterion will harmonize every deviation from the rules of human art that may be pointed out in the book of God, with that majesty of diction, that awful eloquence, which is to be found in the Bible, and no where else but in the Bible.

“ Mr. Carson,” says Mr. Menzies, “ admits the existence of deviations from the laws of grammar, according to the best use,” of “ literary blemish,” of “ inaccuracies of phraseology that may be found in the carelessness of human composition.” Yes, Mr. Carson admits all this ; but he holds that these “ deviations from the laws of grammar,” these “ literary blemishes,” these “ inaccuracies of phraseology,” are all the work of the Holy Spirit, that they are used in the most perfect wisdom, and that they serve God’s purpose better than conformity to the rules of art would have done. Is there any thing in this that will countenance the bold blasphemy of Dr. Tholuck, who admits “ errors of the pen, forgetfulness,” &c. in an Apostle ? No, no, I have no sympathy with Dr. Tholuck in the numerous passages in which he speaks in a disparaging manner of the Word of God.

“ He (Mr. Carson) speaks of the Bible being above attention to minute accuracies, and laughs at the officious zeal of the critics in pointing out means of dignifying its grammatical inaccuracies with the honours of their art.” Yes, I do so. But does this admit error in an inspired writer ? Is this in the most dis-

tant degree akin to what we blame in Dr. Tholuck? "Luke i. 64," says Mr. Menzies, "is spoken of as merely an instance of careless composition into which even the most accurate and attentive writers will fall, when they do not frequently revise their composition." Look again, Mr. Menzies, and you will see that I have not said that Luke i. 64, is an instance of careless composition; but that "the deviation from rule," of which Luke i. 64 is an example, is an instance of careless composition. Speaking of the form of expression in general, of which Luke i. 64 is an example, and asserting that it is not a figure of any kind, I say, "The deviation from rule is not intentionally for ornament. It is merely an instance," &c. It is then the deviation from rule of which the assertion is made. I mean the form of expression in general, without intending to apply it to Luke i. 64. The form of expression in human writings has such an origin. But instead of ascribing such an origin to it in Luke i. 64, I expressly say, "There is no reason, then, why the Holy Spirit should not imitate a style so perfectly natural?" Do not I here expressly assert that in Luke i. 64, this form of expression is intentionally adopted by the Spirit of God? Does not this imply that the preceding observation refers to the deviation from rule in general, and not to the example in Luke i. 64? How could other writers be liable to fall into that particular example of this deviation from rule? It is into that particular deviation from rule, and not into that particular example of it, that the most accurate and attentive writers are liable to fall. My meaning is not that an error in the grammatical

construction, Luke i. 64, was committed through haste or carelessness in the inspired writer, but that the inspired writer, uttering the words of the Holy Spirit, used a form of expression which in human writings is an instance of deviation from rule occasioned by haste or carelessness even in the most accurate judges of the correctness and elegancies of composition.

“The same passage,” says Mr. Menzies, “is afterwards spoken of as an oversight,” &c. Look again, Mr. Menzies. I have not said, and I do not mean, that Luke i. 64 is an oversight; but that the “deviation from rule” exemplified in that passage is an oversight. In hasty composition the deviation will easily escape the notice of the most accurate judge of composition. But I do not mean that the particular instance of deviation in Luke i. 64, is the result of haste or carelessness. I am speaking of the deviation as a mode of speech. When I say, “*This* is an oversight,” &c., let the preceding context be examined, and it will be found that the antecedent to *this* is not the passage, Luke i. 64; but “the deviation from rule.” Indeed, when in my writings on the doctrine of inspiration, I have so expressly extended it to every word originally in the Scriptures, I could not be supposed, without the most reckless inconsistency, to find in them any deficiency from human weakness. Had Mr. Menzies been as careful in ascertaining the meaning of my expression by my explicitly avowed sentiments, as he has been with respect to Dr. Tholuck, he would not have perceived any shadow of sanction in me for the unhallowed freedom of his author in treating the word of the living God. I cannot read Dr. Tho-

luck's work on the Epistle to the Romans without unmingled abhorrence of the manner in which he treats the words of the Spirit of God.

When examples of deviation from rule, then, are found in the Scriptures, my practice is, not to seek a sanction for them in the barbarous terms of art that have been invented to explain them as figures of speech, but to shew that the Holy Spirit pours contempt on that which is highest in the estimation of human wisdom. I admire in them also the divine wisdom that makes them a gin and a snare to human wisdom. God sends his word to the world in a plain garb, and the world will not receive it, because it comes not bedizzened with all the tinselled ornaments of art. I have a sovereign contempt for the understanding of any man that rejects revelation, because it speaks not always in accordance with human rules of eloquence. The wisdom of heaven is in its eloquence, and the wisdom of heaven is in its "*rudeness of speech.*" But in these statements have I any fellowship with the flippancy and irreverence with respect to Scripture language manifested by Dr. Tholuck? Does not Dr. Tholuck censure and amend the style of Scripture as freely as any reviewer would the writing of a human author? Not only does he take the liberty of questioning the propriety of the language of Scripture, he makes equally free with the matter. I have no hostile feelings towards this eminent German. I recognise him as a man of learning, and rejoice to find him so strongly opposed to the Neologians. But I believe that Mr. Haldane's discipline is more for his advantage than is Mr. Menzies' praise. Were Dr. Tholuck to receive correct views of divine truth, he

might indeed be a second Luther to Germany. But as far as I have examined any of his writings, there is a lamentable deficiency in his knowledge of divine truth, and a disgusting remainder of Neological phraseology, not as yet completely purged out of his constitution. I hope he will go forward; and then I shall joyfully bid him God speed. It is not, however, as a commentator, that I think Dr. Tholuck is ever likely to be a benefit to the church of God. Independently of his errors, I do not at all agree with the general opinion that he is a great critic. Had I any object in the assertion, I would not scruple to say that his criticism is as faulty as his sentiments. I can find no light in him; and I have met several ministers of the Gospel, who, looking upon him as an eminently learned man and profound critic, confess that they can receive little instruction from his works. He is very willing to give his help to the Apostles in correcting their style; but his own style is as dark as that of an oracle. He is a mere book manufacturer. He feasts us continually with the Fathers, with a dessert from the Apocrypha, the Talmuds, and the Koran. But whatever may be thought with respect to his learning and talents, it is utterly impossible to free him from the charge of treating the Scriptures with a profane boldness.

By the same Author.

Examination of the Principles of Biblical Interpretation of Ernesti, Ammon, Stuart, and other Philologists, 12mo. 1836.

Refutation of Dr. Henderson on Inspiration. With a Critical Discussion on 2 Tim. iii. 16. &c. &c.

PRICE TWO SHILLINGS.



Princeton Theological Seminary-Speer Library



1 1012 01010 7912